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## THE JANUARY AND FEBRUARY RECORDS

By THE EDITOR

LAST month we published our caricaturist's notion of high tide at Jethou; but the reality on the night of March 5th was not nearly so amusing. Owing to a mistake the records from one of the leading companies were not sent off as usual, and as the time to play them over in preparation for this quarterly review became shorter and shorter I grew more and more fussy. The result was that on March 4th my boat crossed from Guernsey in weather that would have been avoided had not the skipper felt bound to bring over if possible the last galleys of *Fairy Gold* and what he hoped were the missing records. The wind increased so rapidly that he was unable to get back and the *Watch Me* had to lie on her moorings in an open anchorage. The wind veered to north-west and was blowing a gale by dusk; but in the early hours of the morning it went due north rising to full hurricane force, with the *Watch Me* now on a dead lee shore. There was a squall of terrific force. The chain broke and she was driven on a reef, where the second anchor held her

when the tide rose. We managed to save the engine with a great struggle, after which a 750 lb. weight had to be dragged over a hundred yards of jagged rocks covered with slimy weed. The tide was coming up fast behind, but at dusk we had the engine out of reach. During the night the *Watch Me* went entirely to pieces. She was a stout-hearted craft and had about circumnavigated the globe in mileage since she was mine. A smashed motor-car is merely ludicrous, but a wrecked boat never seems so human as in her ultimate conquest by the sea; and to hear the decks groan as the masts are wrenched away is to hear the groan of a sentient creature. There's not a book on my shelves, not a gramophone or a record but she has brought it to Jethou, and I am sure you will not grudge me these few lines in commemoration of a craft that before she became mine had sailed without mishap these waters for fifty years. May sea-nymphs tend the gallant spirit that was hers and cherish the *Melusine* who succeeds her.

The laggard records have not even yet arrived,



and as I cannot suitably review the whole quarter without them, I think it will be fairer to confine myself to the January and February issues. I don't know what my readers feel, but I feel that we are living on the verge of the most exciting times that the gramophone has yet experienced. The rapidity with which the new method of recording is being developed offers an enchanting prospect of the future, and whether or not the old method of recording has been stung by the competition, there is no doubt that the improvement there is deeply marked. Take, for instance, the Parlophone recording of Mozart's *E flat Symphony*. I am sure that this is the best orchestral recording they have achieved so far. From every point of view it must be held to displace the Columbia version conducted by Weingartner. I fancy that the average man will enjoy this symphony more immediately than either the *G minor* or the *Jupiter*, and it is a boon to have it at a popular price. This is a safe investment, and I particularly recommend it to those colonial readers who have been writing to me to bewail the high cost of records. I must say the prices they have to pay do sound alarming. I imagine that the import duty has something to do with it, but if I try to express what I think about the scandal of taxing a man's music my pen will run away with me. Why does no bureaucrat ever contemplate the advisableness of taxing the ugly and unpleasant adjuncts of modern life?

The *Tristan* introductions from Parlophone maintain the standard set for its Wagner by the company, and Goldmark's *Sakuntala Overture*, if not very interesting, is tuneful enough. I did not much care for the *Wasps Overture* of Vaughan Williams. I presume that it was written for the Cambridge performance of the play. But it makes not the least Aristophanic impression on me. The same old folk-songs are persistent as wasps themselves. The music is donnish. As one grows older one begins to fancy that dons are mythical creatures; but here they are, buzzing like Polonius. I wish that some energetic enthusiast at Vocalion headquarters would dig out Hubert Parry's *Overture to The Clouds*.

All the orchestral records from H.M.V. show a marked advance in the new style. Tchaikovsky's *Marche Slav*, which is done by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski, has a tune that a barrel-organ might envy. A shortened version of it used to occupy the fourth side of the H.M.V. 1812 *Overture* records. I presume that we shall soon be getting the 1812 under new conditions, and if it is as much better than the other as this *Marche Slav* we shall get a thrill. Rather less than justice was done in these columns to the new *Leonora Overture*. Undoubtedly the nasal quality of the strings is

still unpleasantly evident at times. I am at a loss to explain why massed strings with the new recording should show this tendency; the violin and 'cello solos are not marred by any trace of it. The *Flying Dutchman Overture* is probably the best of the H.M.V. orchestral records during these last two months. What beautiful music it is; and yet when I first heard it it was just an incomprehensible noise. *Verb. sap.*

From Columbia we had the third Beethoven Piano Concerto which, while it cannot compare with the last two, has a melodious charm that could hardly escape a child's ear. The recording is somewhat muffled and the records are more suitably played in connection with records of chamber music. Beside other orchestral records they sound a little tame. This has nothing whatever to do with old or new recording. I should have said the same before the new recording was thought of. The Bach suite arranged by Sir Henry Wood will no doubt be very popular, but personally I was bored by it. I am beginning to revolt against this excessive worship of Bach at the moment, and except very occasionally it seems to me a waste of time to orchestrate pieces he wrote for smaller effects. I fancy that the contemporary vogue for Bach is a revolt against noise. Modern musicians have been trying to compete with railway-trains, trams, motor-cars, and omnibuses. This is one reason why modern music is unpopular, for that it is unpopular one must admit. Moreover, people are still emotionally tired, and this worship of Bach is more likely to be the sign of a fatigued public than of improvement in its taste. The success of the *Beggars' Opera*, which was to the drama what Golders Green is to architecture, was a symptom of lowered vitality. Golders Green may be pretty, but give me a hideous villa of the late 'seventies which expresses the mind of the architect in preference to a toy-town eighteenth century, which merely expresses his superficial education. This seems the moment to say that I was thoroughly bored by the three records of *Lionel and Clarissa*. The recording of them by H.M.V. is admirable, and that makes the inability of the performers to be distinct all the more exasperating. On me it made the impression of a second-rate amateur operetta. Some people affect to like amateur performances; I don't. I think if a lot of young women want to come on a stage and sing they ought to know something about singing. I haven't seen the performance, but I did see the *Beggars' Opera*, and it was all too much self-conscious for my taste. Contemporary criticism is very severe on pseudo-medievalism, but a pseudo-eighteenth century is just as tiresome—indeed, more tiresome, because the falsification is less justifiable for the reason of historical ignorance.

I shall put the Handel *'Cello Concerto in G minor*,



issued by Parlophone, with the chamber music. They are attractive records, the fourth side of which is occupied by one of Mozart's *Minuets* played by the Eweler Quartet. Barjanski, the soloist, gives a suave performance, but on the discs sent to me there are one or two of those flaws that the 'cello, more than any other instrument, seems liable to inflict upon a record. I alluded last month to the beauty of Schubert's *Trout Quintet* issued by Columbia. Here is an ideal work for the man who wants to like chamber music and is not sure where to begin. The five records are a succession of lovely tunes and, in order to encourage the good cause, I am ready to present the complete album (32s. 6d.) to the reader who sends me in the best short essay, not to exceed three hundred words, on "Why I don't like chamber music." Should the winner still not like chamber music after hearing the *Trout Quintet* he is to present it to the first lover of chamber music who writes in and claims it from him. I think this is rather a sporting competition, but I wager that this quintet doesn't get passed on to anyone else. One of the great mysteries of life is the passion that all string quartets have for playing Bridge's *Three Idylls*. They have now appeared for the third or fourth time on the gramophone, played this time by the London String Quartet. The issue is interesting, for it is, I think, the first string quartet to be recorded by the new methods, and it is odd that both Columbia and H.M.V. (which followed with the Debussy quartet) should have chosen what I may call the buzzy type of chamber music to introduce the new recording. I cannot honestly say that I think either performance a great success, nor can I say that I think the recording of either is a great success. At first I supposed that my dislike of the effect achieved was due to my dislike of the *Three Idylls*, which to my ear sound as if somebody had upset a bee-hive in the next room; but no prejudice against the music can warp my judgment of the Debussy quartet, and so I shall affirm that so far the new recording has failed with string quartets. However, when we look back on that ghastly *Boutique Fantasque* of a short time ago and compare it with the last orchestral recordings, we may feel convinced that the problem of recording string quartets by new methods will soon be solved. If I may be allowed to make a suggestion to the recorders, I should like to urge Haydn, Mozart, or early Beethoven before any more modern chamber music is done. I cannot understand why the exquisite quality of tone in such records as Chemet's performance of Saint Saëns' *Rondo Capriccioso*, or Thibaud's equally beautiful tone in Beethoven's *Romance in F* cannot be extended to the four instruments. Under the old method of recording there was nothing like the present disparity between solo strings

and quartets. These last two records came from H.M.V. Also from H.M.V. came a magnificent Suggia record of Boccherini's *Sonata in A major*. I don't want to leave the track by starting a discussion of machines, but I must beg all owners of the new H.M.V. machine to take rather more trouble about giving it a suitable position in the room than some of them apparently do. It is worse than useless to put on the Columbia records of Percy Grainger in Chopin's *A minor Sonata*, and sit gaping in front of the instrument like a cat in front of a rat-hole. If Percy Grainger were playing a grand piano in a drawing-room the audience wouldn't sit underneath the piano to listen to him, or even stand round it watching the hammers. I will assert that, with my machine suitably placed and my audience suitably disposed, not one of them would know that it wasn't a genuine piano playing in the next room. But you *must* give this new H.M.V. machine a bit of room. I don't hesitate to say that records like these Columbia records played on the new H.M.V. are at least four times as loud as anything we have heard on the gramophone; that being the case, it is necessary to provide for the extra noise accordingly. I have seen nowhere either in our own paper or in any other the praise that I think the Columbia Company deserves for these records. That they will clang on some instruments and with certain sound-boxes is inevitable; but it is now up to the sound-box experts to tackle the new recording. I notice a tendency among the quidnuncs to say that the new recording is not good because it is not improved by the sound-boxes on which they have been relying. They might as well send a cow to the butcher because they lack suitable milk-cans. Nobody can accuse me of rushing along the road to welcome the new recording with wild 'eurekas'; but I am not such a fool, now that I have heard enough of it, as not to realise the revolution it is going to cause in the gramophone, and I do beg all the ingenious hierophants of sound not to waste their time and mine by sending me any more old bottles for new wine. I am waiting now for a man to send me a new sound-box which he claims is better on the new machine than the No. 4.

We have several versions of the Bach *Concerto in D minor* for two violins, but so far as the two violins go I think that Fachiri and D'Aranyi have given us the best. I hope that these two great artists will stay with the Vocalion Company, and I hope that the public are supporting them. You know how sometimes, when you walk through a garden, some thrush will sing with what seems an unusual richness, and how for a moment you think it is a nightingale. Even so when an album of mixed violin pieces is being played to me and I am only half listening because I am writing, I will suddenly become aware of some exquisite quality



of tone, and when I ask who it was playing the last record I will find that it was Fachiri and D'Aranyi. I have been vaguely aware that thrushes were singing all round me, and then suddenly I ask, "Was not that the nightingale?"

By the way, in praising the Percy Grainger records from Columbia, one must not forget a remarkable performance by Murdoch of some modern Spanish music, the recording of which is perhaps even better than the Grainger, though probably it was easier to record. Finally, there is a small Kreisler record to be mentioned—the first Kreisler with new recording. One could have wished that he had begun with something a little more remarkable than *The Land of the Sky-blue Water*. Does it really matter who plays that song, or how it is recorded? However, nobody would grudge Kreisler even a dozen sky-blue whiskies, if before decanting the thirteenth he would pause and play us something that isn't sky-blue or pale pink or any other chocolate-box ribbon colour. I wonder if any of our readers read about the young American woman from Kalamazoo who found Kreisler's last record so sweet that she ate it and died, singing the *Angels' Serenade* with her last breath.

Among the instrumental records, I must call everybody's attention to a delicious performance by Leon Goossens of a Handel sonata, the orchestral accompaniment of which Mr. Batten, the musical director of the Edison Bell Company, has arranged with much skill and charm. This is a 12-inch disc. From Velvet Face, too, comes a concertino for the oboe by Colin, as dainty a 10-inch record as anybody could wish. Leon Goossens is probably the greatest oboe player that ever lived, and I do hope that the Velvet Face people, who are so fortunate as to have him on their list of artists, will give us more records like these. It is a difficult matter nowadays to choose one's records every month, but that Handel sonata really must not be missed. Strauss's *Burlesque in D minor* for piano and orchestra with Andersen Tyrer as soloist is another interesting item from the same company. I'm not sufficiently learned to appreciate the burlesque part, but my ears found it pleasant. With the advent of the new recording we are evidently in for plenty of organ records. This will give joy to many. So far, I fancy the H.M.V. record of Boellman's *Suite Gothique* is the best, but I cannot pretend that my own diaphragm has yet responded as it would to a real organ.

What about the singing during January and February? Madame Gerhardt gave us four *lieder*—two of Brahms' loveliest on a 12-inch record and two of Hugo Wolf's on a 10-inch. I don't feel that the great singer was at her best in any of them. There is a lack of ease, an excess of art. Nor is Madame Galli-Curci at her best with Tito Schipa in two duets from *La Traviata*. The *Musical Times*

apropos of this record challenged me to defend the music. Was there ever such a rum-tum-tum accompaniment, the critic asked. I willingly admit the rum-tum-tumminess, but there's a good deal of rum-tum-tumminess about the libretto that Verdi was using. *La Dame aux Camélias* is not the kind of play that can afford to have the greatest verse or the greatest music spent upon it. And yet with all its faults the story is still alive. Why do the *Dame aux Camélias* and Murger's *Vie de Bohême* and Du Maurier's *Trilby* hold their own somehow against the tide of fashion so that however far it ebbs away from them they are never quite stranded? And the answer is that each of them in its own way holds a drop of the immortal substance of foolish youth—a rumpty-tumpty kind of youth perhaps, but still authentic and recognisable. To be bored by the tunes and rum-ti-tum of *Traviata* means that the listener is bored by the memory of his own youthful folly, or that he is too young to think that he could ever be so foolish himself. To be bored by *Traviata* is either to admit that the arteries are hardening or that one hasn't any arteries worth hardening. In saying this I am assuming that the listener has not been accustomed to think of life in terms of music. Such an one would obviously be justified in rejecting *Traviata*, and I should suppose not merely *Traviata*, but all opera. I enjoy opera enormously, but I refuse to take it too seriously. If a great poet could be an equally great musician, which, so far as we are entitled to say it of anything, is impossible, a great opera might be written. Wagner wrote great music, but can we imagine anything more ridiculous than the concomitants of that music? Verdi wrote the tunes that *Traviata* required. To have supplied it with the music he wrote for *Otello* would have been ridiculous. Puccini appears to do something more elaborate with *Bohême*, but there's plenty of rum-tum-tumminess in his melodious bass. Charpentier tried to be too clever in *Louise*, and the result is that *Louise* is already falling behind *Traviata* and *Bohême* in its appeal to an audience. After all, that finally is what an opera must do, and that is what *La Traviata* does.

The Caruso record issued by H.M.V. is not of great interest, and I was not much thrilled by the Martinelli record. On the other hand, the record of Gigli in the arias from *Lucia* struck me as magnificent, and here the new recording has been a great success. Apollo Granforte is a failure in two Spanish songs. Nobody that I have heard can compare with de Gogorza for these; to hear Granforte sing *La Paloma* after him is a sad decline. Eric Marshall gave us the best record I have heard of his—Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh'*, and Brahms' *Wie bist du, meine Königin*. This is commended to those who enjoy *lieder*. I shall leave Miss Anna Thursfield's début on the gramophone for the time. It is really



unfair to criticise any singer until he or she has given us at least three records. To take an instance, Mr. Norman Long, who is a newcomer, I think, produced for the H.M.V. list in February as dreary a humorous record as you could hear, and then in March (I anticipate my next month's criticism) one of the funniest songs I've heard for a long time in *The Drage Way*. So I shall leave Miss Thursfield, who is too important a singer to be proclaimed a success or a failure on the gramophone on the score of one 10-inch record.

In the Columbia list I thoroughly enjoyed the two Greek records of Ulysses Lappas. But what snobs we all are! Quite a great deal of my pleasure was derived from the fact that I could understand some of it and couldn't help feeling rather proud of myself for doing so. However, that is not being fair to the singer, for his personality *does* appear to much greater advantage in his native tongue than in Italian songs. I wish he would sing that popular eulogy of Smyrna—I can't give the exact name, but it is to the Levant what *O sole Mio* or *Torna a Surriento* are to the Bay of Naples. And on the other side will he sing a popular waltz beginning, if I remember it rightly, σφιξι με? I can guarantee him a popular success in England with these two songs. They may be as lowbrow as a gorilla, but, believe me, Κόριε, they will *sell* and give us all something new to hum. Perhaps the recording angel of Columbia will do me the favour of passing on this suggestion to M. Lappas, and remember that, for a change, I am asking for two *popular* songs.

There is no need at this date to say much about Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf to readers of this paper, but I hope that her two songs from Johann Strauss's *Fledermaus* won't be overlooked when they are turning over the latest Parlophone records. They are quite delicious in a simple tuneful way. There are also a couple of Schubert's songs from her, which are as lovely as you would expect. I have already written with some enthusiasm of Fritzi Jokl as a soprano. February brought us another splendid record from her of the page's arias from *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Titania's song from *Mignon* on the other side.

From the Vocalion bulletins I must pick out Mr. Murray-Davey's magnificent bass record for very special praise. I never heard an English singer with a better French accent. But that is after all nothing. The arias from *Robert le Diable* and *La Juive* are given in the grand style, and it will be a shame if this record is swamped. I do my best to be fair to the quantity of vocal records as they appear, but it is impossible to deal with all of them twice over in this paper, and since it is pleasanter to praise than to condemn, I try to select for mention those which make an extra appeal to me. This does not mean that there are not plenty of good records

which I do not mention. Lack of mention does not necessarily mean condemnation. I should like to praise the set of Stanford's *Songs of the Sea*, published by Vocalion and sung by Mr. Watcyn Watcyns, but they are not as good as they ought to be, and surely in *The Old Superb* the best verse of the lot has been cut out. If there wasn't room on the record for that last verse, why not have cut the second? I don't feel very enthusiastic about Miss Paikin's voice, but I have never had the luck to hear her in the flesh. When I say that, I am judging her, of course, by the highest standards, and I cannot agree with those who consider her a second Tetrizzini. I prefer Miss Destournel's voice, though she is not improving as she ought. *Beloved, it is morn* may not be a very good song, but there is really no excuse for singing it quite so stupidly as Miss Destournel sings it on a Vocalion record.

Lately—and very jolly it has been—we have had a number of Scots songs. H.M.V., indeed, devoted a whole supplement to them. I see Joseph Hislop got into trouble with our Mr. K. K. for his performance of *Macgregor's Gathering*. I suppose it is too operatic, but still, legitimate or not, I had a real good thrill out of it. And I protest that a Highlander has ten times as much drama in him as a Lowlander. I admit that John Knox would have hated Hislop's rendering of *Macgregor's Gathering*, but then don't let us forget how the Macgregors must have hated John Knox. Talking of the Macgregors I wish I could praise more warmly Alexander Macgregor's singing in this supplement; but somehow he never quite brings off one of the songs allotted to him. Mr. Andrew Shanks is much more successful. His *Cam' ye by Athol* is glorious. The best Scots baritone to my taste is John Matthewson, whose records are issued by Vocalion. There are still a number of songs which ought to be recorded. Do give us *Maclean of Ardgour*, Mr. Shanks. And Mr. Matthewson, could you not give us *Touch not the Nettle*?

Light tenors have been appearing like primroses. The one I like best is Mr. Victor Carne in the Vocalion list; and yet I don't know, Mr. W. F. Watt of Columbia is equally good. I like Mr. John Turner of H.M.V., but I detect in him that mock turtle temperament to which all tenors are liable to succumb. The songs that light tenors sing have usually been so generously watered beforehand by the tears of the poet and the composer that the singer can give his own tears an afternoon off. Granted that life in these bureaucratic days is a melancholy business, it is not so melancholy as tenors would have us believe, and to wrap a mourning-band round one's throat like . . . but I have said enough. And I must not leave you with the impression that John Turner is already a mock turtle. At present, he sings without affectation and with a good deal of charm. To return for a moment



to the H.M.V. Scottish supplement, Miss Bloss Herron and Miss Crue Davidson should have been mentioned with appreciation. Miss Davidson's singing of *Hush a' ba Birdie* was the best of her songs, and makes a delightful record with Miss Herron's rendering of *Jock o' Hazledean* on the other side.

Before I talk about the choral records, which are really the feature of the opening of 1926, I want to enumerate a few records of the lighter kind which gave me genuine pleasure and amusement, and which I feel safe in recommending to everybody. No doubt in the British Isles their success is already assured, for the public is quick to discover a good popular record, and I am giving this list with an eye to the amusement of our overseas readers.

#### COLUMBIA.

3740. Ella Shields : *Jolly Good Fellows*.

3855. Art Gilham : *How's your folks and my folks?*

#### HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

B.2182. The Revellers : *Dinah*.

B.2236. The Revellers : *Oh, Miss Hannah*.

These are really magnificent examples of humorous quartet singing. American, of course.

B.2192. Jack Smith : *Knee Deep in Daisies*.

B.2226. Jack Smith : *Cecilia*.

This American so-called "whispering" comedian is marvellous. So are his records.

B.2220, B.2221, and B.2222 : These enchanting records are of A. A. Milne's poems from *When We Were Very Young*, set by H. Fraser-Simson and sung by George Baker. When I saw George Baker's name as the singer, I said : "Why on earth George Baker for this?" But when I heard them, I said : "I can't think of anybody who could have sung them so well."

In publishing these records His Master's Voice has made some amends for those children's albums which were worse than the bad oranges they looked like. Now I suppose I shall be told that those Orange Perils sold far better than these Milne records. Well, if they did, the country deserves to be overtaxed.

#### PARLOPHONE.

Much the best set of tangos I have heard and coming from Buenos Ayres. I should add that these are in the March bulletin (R3206-10).

#### VOCALION.

I shall have to choose another March record, which is of Nelson Keys in some wonderful imitations (X.9715). They were praised and justly praised by our Mr. Peppering.

Add to these records a jolly 10-inch band record of the Garde Républicaine, 3045 in the Columbia list, and do not fail to secure another remarkable Balalaika record, 3846. There have been some splendid band records lately, and I cannot resist adding one from the H.M.V. list of the Coldstream

playing the *Naval Patrol* and the *Scottish Patrol* (C.1234).

After this interval for refreshment let us get to work on the choral records in which I include the quartet singing. So many superlatives have been flying about in the advertisement columns over these choral records that I feel chary of introducing the comparative. But I think we must admit that at the moment H.M.V. win with their Albert Hall record of the *Messiah* excerpts, especially when you consider that the Albert Hall echo is thrown in without extra charge. Yes, but seriously, this is an astonishing feat of recording. I'm afraid I'm not one of those who want to badger the recording companies into giving us more Handel. It seems to me occasionally that we get nothing but Handel. How anybody can prefer the *Messiah* sung in the English style of oratorio to music and singing like that recorded by the Parlophone of the Sistine Choir is beyond my comprehension. There are moments when one finds one's friends on the other side of the Grand Canyon and that's all that can be said. Many of my musical friends consider the style of the Sistine Choir theatrical. Well, I consider the *Messiah* a piece of eighteenth century theatricality. Why, there's not an angel who is not wearing a bagwig! And as for vain repetitions, there are moments when I feel that if anybody sings one more halleluia I shall scream. I am sure that the *Messiah* has done more to prejudice people against Heaven than any other musical composition in existence. However, my hatred of oratorio does not hinder my admiration of the H.M.V. achievement, which is unbounded. The Columbia record of the Sheffield Choir is not quite so good as an illusion of the actual performance; but it's wonderful enough. I enjoyed a great deal better than either of these Handel records, the H.M.V. records of the Leeds Choir conducted by Albert Coates in the *Mater Ora Filium* of Arnold Bax, and Purcell's *Soul of the World*. I can only judge Bax's work by its capacity for affecting my emotion, but I feel when I am listening to these records that here is great music. The stage as well as the concert hall is going to benefit from the new recording, and it's good to get the *Carmen* march not to mention the *Kermesse* from *Faust* and some *Lohengrin* all sounding really like an operatic chorus. Albert Coates is conducting, which means that the performance is as good as can be got out of the material at his disposition.

It is not only in choral records that the new recording helps. Every vocal quartet is going to benefit enormously. But this review is long enough, and I am only going to mention one. That is the Kedroff Quartet, whose two records issued by Columbia in January and February are really magnificent. Readers should not judge them by their earlier records, which were as good as quartet records could be then. But now, with new methods,



all of the subtlety that could not reach the record before is there. I can assure you that this singing is a delight, and I hope you will take the trouble to hear these records yourselves. One more record I *must* mention, and that is the *Eriskay Love Lilt* sung by the Glasgow Orpheus Choir. This is supremely beautiful. Let me cut myself free from superlatives before I expire.

I suppose that the issue of a compendium of Beethoven's letters translated by J. S. Shedlock and edited by Dr. Eaglefield-Hull (J. M. Dent, 10s. 6d.), is valuable for students of music, but my own feelings are so tremendously hostile to the publication of anything that enables the hyena biographers of the present to nose in the entrails of dead lions, that I open a work like this in trepidation. I don't really believe that a study of these letters will help anybody to appreciate the *Ninth Symphony* better; but at any rate, the selection has not been made for the apparent purpose of belittling a mighty genius, and that is something for which to be grateful. I was shocked to read Mr. Ernest Newman's defence of the publication of passages in Mozart's letters which a pious hand thought to have erased for ever, but which with the help of micro-photography have now been deciphered.

Mr. Newman thinks that it is a laudable achievement to destroy the legend of Mozart built up by his admirers, and he seems to exult in the publication of "priapic passages" from letters to his wife. Is it really so important to grasp the fact that Mozart was not a saint? Whether the quintet in G minor was written by a eunuch or a satyr signifies nothing. We all know the gossip who has heard that the celebrated X goes to bed drunk every night, and we are most of us guilty of having derived some pleasure from the thought that X, however greatly celebrated, is prone to the common weaknesses of humanity. But now this ghoul gossip must violate the tomb. *De mortuis nil nisi malum*. Our democratic mind is so much afraid of any inequality that we grudge the very dead the legend of the least virtue that was theirs on earth.

Indignation over biographers must not allow me to forget that the Orchorsol Company has evolved a new tone-arm and sound-box about which I shall write next month. Wearers of the Lifebelt will be interested to hear that such an intelligent company as the Orchorsol has adopted the principle of flexibility, after a prolonged trial extending over many months. So once again: *Verb. sap.*

COMPTON MACKENZIE.



## THE DE LARA OPERA SCHEME

THE letter from the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE, which was published on the gramophone page of the *Daily Telegraph* on February 13th, expressed shortly the views which, he felt, were those of our readers who have given thought to the matter of establishing opera upon a secure basis in this country. The subject has been in the air for a long while, and one does not have to be a dreamer or a fanatic in order to think that the times are very nearly ripe for a definite removal of the disability under which London, alone among the capitals of any importance in Europe, labours.

Over a year ago THE GRAMOPHONE drew the attention of its readers to the scheme for an Imperial and Permanent Opera House in London, which had been started by Mr. Isidore de Lara in 1924. The details of this scheme were set forth by Mr. de Lara himself; but if anyone is not by this time acquainted with them we shall be very glad to post literature on the subject to any address.

We asked our readers to subscribe to the fund for building and endowing the Opera House through THE GRAMOPHONE. We said, "Send us One Pound. We guarantee to keep that pound in our bank and not to hand it over to Mr. de Lara until the success of his scheme is assured. If, in

our opinion, the moment arises when we no longer think the scheme likely to succeed, we guarantee to return that pound to you intact." Mr. de Lara capped this appeal by promising that if the readers of THE GRAMOPHONE subscribed the sum of Four Thousand Pounds between them he would give a box in the Opera House of his dreams to THE GRAMOPHONE in perpetuity.

The result was partly gratifying, partly disappointing. Some of our readers—just as they became annual subscribers from our first number, just as they joined the National Gramophonic Society at its very start—sent their Pound to this office blindly. "You say that the de Lara scheme deserves support. That is good enough for me." All honour to them! But the great majority of our readers held back and were silent. Why? Either they could not afford the money or *they did not understand*. There was something which puzzled them, made them hesitate, vaguely distrustful.

Frankly, we could do no more on our side than we did. If people did not trust our judgment to act wisely we could not press them. Perhaps the scheme itself was not as concrete or as lucid as we should have wished. Other schemes were broached in different quarters. No one would want to



prejudice any of them, for they all worked in the same spirit.

But now, to-day, the situation is clearer. On March 16th, in a committee room at the House of Commons, an important meeting was held with Mr. John Beckett, M.P., in the chair, and those present heard Mr. de Lara repeat his scheme and answer questions. A committee of five was appointed (with power to co-opt other members), which has already got to work to raise a propaganda fund. This is not likely to prove difficult. An office with an organising secretary and a small staff will be set up at once to make the de Lara scheme known throughout the length and breadth of the land, and to collect the necessary funds for the building of an Opera House and for the endowment of it.

We have no space to go into further details now. But this we can say—that a real step forward has been made, and that the nucleus committee is composed of enthusiastic but shrewd and sensible

people, who will consider suggestions fairly and will act with power and discretion. There is no reason why they should not be successful.

One word more. No reader of this paper who cares for opera need wait to be canvassed for a subscription by the committee. Every reader should be himself or herself a canvasser in small or large degree for the committee. Any sum sent to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1, for the de Lara Opera Fund—Five Shillings, Ten Shillings, One Pound and upwards—will be put in our bank and held there and announced in THE GRAMOPHONE for the encouragement of others. If the newly formed committee has not achieved the success that it anticipates by October 1st next, we guarantee to return every penny subscribed by a reader to her or to him.

Is this a fair request? Do we presume upon the confidence which you have shown in other matters towards THE GRAMOPHONE?



# THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

## Gems from Half-Forgotten Operas—II.

GOUNOD.

COMING now to the French school, let me begin by reminding readers that here especially we find a large number of operas which are only forgotten or neglected outside of France. There, belonging as they do to the native repertoire, they enjoy prescriptive right to occasional revival, and can even, some of them, claim unbroken popularity. In London nowadays we hear Gounod, for instance, only through his *Faust* and *Roméo et Juliette*; but there are other operas of his worth hearing that we have either never listened to or are unlikely ever to hear again.

Such, for example, are his *Reine de Saba*, tabooed at Covent Garden because its story is Biblical (!), and his *Philémon et Baucis*, which Augustus Harris mounted with a success that for a few seasons was quite remarkable. *Philémon*, indeed, is a gem of melody and grace, and in connection with it I always think of Pol Plançon's exquisite performance as Jupiter and Santley's superb rendering of the stances of Vulcain, *Au bruit des lourds marteaux*, which he first introduced at the old "Pops." I am surprised that the air just named should not be recorded more frequently; it is well known, full of energy and *entrain*, and a piece

that will live. Gounod's *Mireille* is another charming work, but like his *Polyeucte* (founded upon Corneille's tragedy), the story does not lend itself to operatic treatment, and the beauty of the music gets, so to speak, submerged beneath uninteresting details. I remember witnessing one revival of *Mireille* at Covent Garden, but *Polyeucte* has never been done here; while the *Reine de Saba* I never saw abroad on the stage, though I have heard it in concert form under the title of *Irene* according to the English version of the late H. B. Farnie.

*La Reine de Saba*, which followed *Faust* at the Paris Opéra after an interval of three years in February, 1862, furnishes another case of a beautiful score rendered useless by a stupid libretto. But the accomplished master was in his prime, and half a dozen numbers at least deserve to survive. Of these one of the best known is the soprano air, *Plus grand dans son obscurité* (*Far greater in his lowly state*), which, strangely enough, does not appear to have been recorded. The noble tenor air, *Inspirez-moi* (*Lend me your aid*), was made famous in this country by Edward Lloyd, who used to sing it magnificently. (Would that he had made a record of it!) Somehow, no one else seems to have



surmounted its lofty *tessitura* or sustained its lengthy phrases with the same consummate ease and undeviating smoothness of luscious tone. No, not even Enrico Caruso, for all his marvellous reserves of power and *sostenuto*. The best that may be said of his interpretation (H.M.V., D.B.145) is that it was unusually suave, unforced, and polished. It was evidently not the sort of thing that imparted the inspiration he was asking for, nor was he perhaps over-familiar with it. Another French performance, by Maurice Oger (Voc., O.41042) is dramatic enough and achieves certain vocal effects, but lacks dignity and breadth of style. Less distinguished still, though sufficiently solid and suggestive of stammina are the two English examples by John Harrison (H.M.V., D.234) and John Perry (Parlo., E.10220), the latter's being spread over the two sides of the disc. Both singers have capital voices, and it seems a pity that their diction—the vowels particularly—should not reflect the true, unaffected refinement of cultured British speech. Another familiar item from the same opera is the fine bass air, *She alone charmeth my sadness* (*Sous les pieds*), once the *cheval de bataille* of the celebrated "Signor Foli," whom his friends all knew as Jack Foley—born not a very long way from Tipperary, me bhoy! He, too, was a splendid singer, and I am glad to be able to say that worthy reproductions of his reading of this piece have been made by Robert Radford (H.M.V., D.269) and Norman Allin (Col. 756). Both artists are exceptionally commendable in this instance, alike as to colour and quality of timbre, enunciation, and musical phrasing generally. The recording is also good.

*Mireille* is thought by some French critics to be one of Gounod's "most remarkable and best-inspired scores." At any rate it should have yielded a richer harvest to gramophone artists than is actually in sight. Where is *Mireille's* big air, *Mon cœur ne peut changer*? where Andreleoun's pastoral song, *Le jour se lève*? Chiefly in request, of course, is the well-known waltz air, called in Italian *O d'amor messaggera*, whereof I can mention four attractive examples, viz., Luisa Tetrazzini (H.M.V., D.B.703), Frieda Hempel (H.M.V., D.B.373), Maria Barrientos (Col. 7338), and the French Mlle. Brothier (H.M.V., P.397). To which of these the palm should be awarded it is hard to say, for each has its own particular charm. Tetrazzini atones by a round, delicious quality and faultless intonation for an excessive use of the *rubato* in her *bravura* passages; the fascinating Frieda is consistent in rhythm and brilliancy, and runs her scale up to the E in *alt*; while la Barrientos challenges both her rivals with the exceeding prettiness and delicacy of her execution, including a wonderful *staccato*, and only teases you once with an unduly prolonged high D at the end. The

record of the waltz made by Mlle. Brothier, of the Opéra-Comique, gives the idea of being sung by a soprano who is in the habit of singing the rôle. She renders it prettily, if with no great animation, and executes her runs with the utmost neatness; at the same time there is no effort, no straining to make effects, and the tempo is very leisurely. On the reverse side of this is another air from the same opera, *Si les filles d'Arles sont reines*, done by M. Bauge, a high baritone also engaged at the Opéra-Comique. He has a bright, telling voice, and imbues this characteristic air with all the necessary rhythmical spirit.

#### AMBROISE THOMAS.

I have been slightly in doubt whether to include among my "half-forgotten" collection the *Hamlet* of Ambroise Thomas. On the other side of the Channel it would assuredly be thought high treason to do so; but how many people, I wonder, recall the solitary revival at Covent Garden sixteen years ago, let alone the earlier scattered *reprises* given for the sole purpose of preserving the performing rights at that house? I heard it there in my youth, with the incomparable Faure in his original character of Hamlet, less than a decade after he had created it in 1868 at the Paris Opéra. I heard it again in 1890 with Lassalle as Hamlet, Melba as Ophélie, and Richard as the Queen. I enjoyed portions of it immensely, but, as a whole, the work made no stronger appeal to me than it did to London opera-goers generally. It never struck me as embodying Shakespeare's tragedy, even to the extent that Gounod suggests in his *Romeo and Juliet*, or Verdi, still more finely in his *Othello* and *Merry Wives of Windsor* (*Falstaff*). But, whilst I object to Hamlet trolling forth a drinking song in the theatre, I am not in the least averse to listening to the same spirited piece in my studio, especially when sung by such distinguished gramophonists as Battistini or Titta Ruffo. Of course, they both use the Italian version, *O vin, disaccia la tristezza*; and both give you on the reverse side the touchingly sad air, *Come il romito fior*, which the melancholy Dane sings in the last act. Battistini (H.M.V., D.B.202) is delightful in each, his manly tone fitting the sparkling tune and jolly refrain of the one no less perfectly than the tender sweetness of the other; while Titta Ruffo (H.M.V., D.B.569) imparts in turn his never-failing gusto and a measure of expressive, restrained emotion that is less usual with him.

Ruffo's versatility is also displayed in another record (H.M.V., D.A.352) illustrating Hamlet's first encounter with the Ghost. He gives us on one side, in *spoken* declamation, the speech on the castle platform which is not in the opera at all; and, on the other, the so-called "invocation," *Spettro santo*, wherein Hamlet implores his father's



Ghost to speak to him. Both are well done and impressive, and in the *Apparizione* the artist shows that if he had not been a splendid singer he might have followed in the footsteps of Salvini and Rossi. I must not omit to mention also a particularly fine rendering in French by Maurice Renaud (H.M.V., D.857) of the air noticed above, here entitled *Comme une pâle fleur*. It recalls that famous baritone at his best. He sings it with exquisite pathos, and the rich effect of his native tongue imparts an added charm to the tender melody.

There remains the Mad Scene. It is sung now by every ambitious soprano; and it deserves to be. To my thinking it is far more interesting and characteristic than the display of 'vocal *feux d'artifice* which sudden lunacy engenders in Donizetti's unlucky heroine, Lucia di Lammermoor. It is more varied, richer in contrast, of far greater intrinsic musical value. It is also much more difficult and the fact that it is considerably shortened for the gramophone is perhaps not a disadvantage. The three examples I have tried are by Dame Melba (H.M.V., D.B.364) in French, by Tetrizzini (H.M.V., D.B.543) in Italian, and by Evelyn Scotney (H.M.V., D.968) in English. The first is extremely brilliant, and suggests a heroine really distraught, sweeping onward to an exciting climax that terminates with a glorious trill. The second is remarkable for beauty of tone and execution all through; the third for singularly clean, clear-cut phrases and neat *fiorituri*, with a dazzling chromatic run up to *altissimo* to end with. Hence, I recommend each in turn, leaving the choice of singer and language to the reader.

#### MASSENET.

The half-dozen operas by this composer which are neither successes here nor failures in France, but whereof records are available, comprise *Don César de Bazan* (1872), *Le Roi de Lahore* (1877), *Hérodiade* (1881), *Le Cid* (1885), *Le Jongleur de Notre Dame* (1902), and *Cléopâtre* (1914). To these ought, perhaps, to be added *Werther* (1893) and *La Navarraise* (first produced at Covent Garden, 1894); but at the Opéra-Comique the former almost shares popularity with *Manon* (1884), which is generally regarded as Massenet's *chef-d'œuvre*. I limit my selection, therefore, to the half-dozen first named, reckoning *Thaïs* (1894) likewise among the category of operas too successful for the present purpose.

Massenet was just thirty when he wrote *Don César de Bazan*, the subject being drawn, like that of Wallace's *Maritana*, from the more or less historical drama of Victor Hugo. But where Wallace succeeded amazingly with his much-derided ballad-opera, Massenet registered a literal fiasco in 1872, which he only obliterated five years later with *Le Roi de Lahore*. Two years after that we

were hearing *Il Rè di Lahore* in Italian at Covent Garden, and never shall I forget the impression created in it by Lassalle, who then made his début in his original part of Scindia. His golden voice and finished art secured for the opera whatever favour it won, notably in the beautiful air, *Promesse de mon avenir* (*O casto fior del mio sospir*), which is about the only number in the score that the gramophone has preserved. Other baritones have sung it since, but not with Lassalle's enchanting tone or height of sensuous charm. Nearest to him, perhaps, comes de Gogorza (H.M.V., D.B.627) with much amorous tenderness and many *rallentandos*. Next I am inclined to place a very expressive rendering by Eric Marshall (Voc., I.04109), whose French may not be immaculate, but whose style here is both impassioned and sincere. Frankly, the Italians Battistini (H.M.V., D.B.150) and Titta Ruffo (D.B.401) lack the caressing touch for this song. The latter, who sings it in Italian, overloads it with sheer energy and emphasis, to an accompaniment that is super-thin.

The music of Jules Massenet makes up by its charm for what it lacks in originality, and it demands above everything, charm from its interpreters—the one predominant feature of the French school. Without that it fails to rivet the ear. Take *Hérodiade* and *Le Cid*. It was the inimitable genius of Jean de Reszke that first won for them those triumphs in Paris which they have never gained elsewhere out of France and Belgium. Yet both operas contain delightful music, when sung by the right artists. The best thing in *Hérodiade*, the baritone air, *Vision fugitive*, holds no fascination as sung in Italian by Campanari (Col. A.5127); but de Luca (H.M.V., D.B.221), in inferior French, makes a decent thing of it; whilst de Gogorza (H.M.V., D.B.627) certainly shows, as he ought, that it is the spasmodic apostrophe of a madman under the nocturnal influence of a drug. The well-known soprano air, *Il est doux, il est bon*, I have heard much better sung than it is by Mary Garden (Col. A.5289); her tone is unsteady and her portamentos seem unending. In a word, this piece (unlike the air in *Thaïs*) does not suit her any better than the lovely *Pleurez, mes yeux*, from *Le Cid*, can be said to suit Dame Melba (H.M.V., D.B.711), or, for that matter, than the tenor air from the same opera, *O souverain, ô juge, ô père*, suited Caruso (H.M.V., D.B.123). The consequence is that they did not call forth the finest qualities of the gifted vocalists who attempted them, and the results are unsatisfactory.

I return for a moment to *Don César de Bazan*, in order to mention the *Sevillana*—its solitary legacy—as recorded by Melba (H.M.V., D.B.711) and Galli-Curci (H.M.V. 611). This is one of those clever imitations of the Spanish idiom for which Massenet was at one time celebrated, and both



artists have striven to realise its picturesque rhythms with maximum effect. There is a strong similarity between the two renderings, as though the one done first had been copied in the other. But that does not matter. I prefer the Galli-Curci for many reasons: its liveliness and tremendous rhythm; its sense of enjoyment and *joie de vivre*; its *staccato*, clear as a bell and as penetrating; above all, its genuine Spanish flavour and *couleur locale*. What a pity Massenet could not give us anything as spontaneous as this in his *Cléopâtre* forty years later. Here, again, is a solitary legacy—the *Air de la Lettre*, from the second act, recorded by Marcel Journet (H.M.V. 259), replete with pathos and deep feeling, phrased in a noble tone by a great artist. But what a dull piece apart from its context!

So with the much-recorded *Légende de la Sauge* (*Fleurissait une rose*) from *Le Jongleur de Notre Dame*. It does not transplant well. In its place in the opera, sung by the warm-hearted monk who cooks for the monastery, it sounds extremely quaint and archaic, in fact, like an old French folk-song, simple and full of character. Separated from the life and colour of the stage, I find it rather tedious music, despite the distinction of the artists who have seized upon it for the gramophone. The happiest effort is that of Dinh Gilly (H.M.V., D.B.693), who combines with an old-world grace a certain amount of vigour and unaffected sentiment, such as the piece calls for. Equally appropriate is the rendering of M. Rouard (French H.M.V., W.408), done like Dinh Gilly's on two sides of the disc, and apparently a Parisian product in every sense. In these there is at least a touch of poetry that is conspicuous by its absence from Cesare Formichi's (Col. D.1491)—an Italian version with little but "voice" to recommend it. Even Journet (H.M.V., D.B.313), although a Frenchman, is too heavy a singer for this kind of thing. When I saw *Le Jongleur* produced at New York in 1908, at Oscar Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera House, the part of Jean, originally written for a tenor, was undertaken by Mary Garden, who certainly gave an effective performance of it. But she can make nothing on the gramophone of the provocative drinking song, *Liberté* (Col. A.5289), which gets him locked up in the monastery. In fact, it is even more tiresome than the *Légende*.

So much for Massenet. Next month I shall conclude this series of "Half-forgotten Operas" with selections derived from other French and Italian sources.

#### THE COMING OPERA SEASON.

By Easter we can form, as a rule, a pretty accurate idea of what the London season is going to bring forth in the way of grand or international

opera. This is, therefore, the right moment for a forecast. Happily, the directorate of the London Opera Syndicate, headed by Lt.-Col. Eustace Blois, consists of a small, but compact, body of resourceful people possessing the courage of their opinions. And, naturally, they have been additionally encouraged by the success of last year's preliminary venture; also their timely announcements for 1926 were of a nature to deserve and receive a highly satisfactory response. Both the German and the Italian seasons—beginning on Monday, May 10th and lasting altogether eight weeks—contain such an abundance of attractive features that they seem bound to excite interest in the various classes of opera-lovers whose combined support is needful.

These are matters that concern the readers of THE GRAMOPHONE Magazine, for the reason that opera on the grand scale and of a high order must necessarily appeal to their musical instincts; and because only the best of its kind can possibly satisfy a taste that becomes ever more and more fastidious. The admirable first-class records of opera that now abound in such unlimited quantities have been educating the modern ear even more than actual stage performances, which have latterly been both limited in supply and variable in quality. In reality the appetite for first-class opera can only grow by what it feeds upon, whether it be presented through the medium of the gramophone or in its complete and living form with all the resources of a great operatic establishment. The point is that the ear so prepared—with the further valuable assistance of the eye—seems more than likely to find a satisfying, if not an ideal, realisation of its most exalted yearnings in course of the campaign that is shortly to start. The repertory is chosen, the leading singers of the day are engaged, the orchestra will be led by conductors of supreme talent. More than this it would be superfluous, at the moment, for me to say.

HERMAN KLEIN.

TO SINGERS: TAUGHT OR UNTAUGHT

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# SOME COMPARISONS OF SONG RECORDS—II.

By JON DE YONG

(The former article appeared in the November number.)

## THE TWO GRENADIERS

**P**LUNKET GREENE, in his fascinating book on "Interpretation in Song," classifies this song, *The Two Grenadiers*, with *Die Forelle* of Schubert and the ballads of Loewe, as a narrative song or a song "in which the story is the principal feature." It is a very just summary of the significance of the work and gives the clue to the manner of its interpretation. A song which tells a story must be approached by the singer in a way which differs completely from his attitude to an "atmospheric" or "contemplative" song; two other of Greene's categories chosen at random. That is to say, the question which any thoughtful artist is bound sooner or later to ask himself is, "How much may I use dramatic representation and how much must I rely on suggestion?" In other words is the artist justified in dramatising or acting the principal or any other rôle in the story, or should he rely for making his effect on telling about what happened in such a way as to call up the clearest possible picture in the minds of his hearers? As far as my own taste is concerned, I affirm unhesitatingly that he should confine his efforts to the latter method. Not only is the greatest and most lasting picture made in this way, but, in my opinion, it is the only legitimate way. A story is not a drama. The singer is not in the position of one who acts but of one who describes, and all his intelligence should be used for that end. Aldous Huxley, in "Barren Leaves," discussing the baroque art of Italy, says: "It's not by making wild and passionate gestures that an artist can awake emotion in the spectator. It isn't done that way. . . . Art which is to move its contemplator must itself be still; it is almost an æsthetic law." In quoting this passage I do not mean to suggest that drama must necessarily offend against this law, that would be ridiculous; but I do say that artists, who dramatise when they should be describing, most certainly are offenders. They are on a par with those mountebanks who "act" folksongs, than which there are few more ridiculous and incongruous spectacles.

The importance of these standards will be apparent when it comes to considering the interpretation of *The Two Grenadiers*, because it is a song which is sung by singers who sing very few songs besides. I mean that it is the sort of song

that an operatic singer would choose to sing on the concert platform, and he would nearly always sing it badly. I had occasion to point to some of the differences between opera and songs in my last article, and this is a case where the confusion of the two styles is not only very easy to make but even quite difficult to avoid. That is to say that even practised song-singers may be, and in fact often are, led astray.

I do not think it necessary to go into details about the story which the song tells. It is sufficiently well known. I was listening "in" the other evening, and the announcer at 2 LO described it as the epitome of the spirit of Napoleon. I should say, rather, that it is the epitome of the spirit of the personal devotion to Napoleon of his soldiers. It tells the story of the reaction of this spirit in two of his grenadiers to the news that he had been defeated and taken prisoner. It is a stirring story, and Schumann has certainly dealt worthily with Heine's poem on the subject.

There are eight records of this song which I propose to discuss, and they cover a wide range of nationality and language—English, German, Russian, French and Italian. They are sung by singers who are well known, famous or comparatively obscure, but one of them stands out in my mind, not because it is well sung—I think it full of faults of interpretation—but because of the man's amazing voice. It is Brunswick 50033, sung by Michael Bohnen, in German. It is the most tremendous voice I ever remember to have heard, and I am glad to have the record simply for the joy of hearing such an enormous volume of sound. There is something fascinating to me in sheer tone. I take my stand with the low-brows on that score. I love to hear the tone of a fat tenor lifting the roof off, and Michael's voice made my head buzz. Not that he is a tenor, he's a baritone, but it's just as satisfactory, and 50033 has a red mark against it in my list of records. I'm quite prepared to be taken to task about this, and to find that "KK" and Co. are out on the warpath after vulgarians who must have their top notes. I don't mind. I like tone; top notes may degrade art; no doubt they do everything bad which has ever been said or written of them; I don't care. I am unrepentant. As they say at Chicago, "the pig likes it." I must admit, however, that apart from its



remarkable excellence in respect of tone this record has many blemishes. It opens well, and the speed is, on the whole, very good; but there are continual exaggerations of accent and tempo which spoil the form of the song as a whole, because they distort the even flow and movement. The word "mehr," for instance, near the beginning of the song is so overstressed that the effect is nearly ridiculous, and the same applies to the end of the song. This is, no doubt, a splendid imitation of a dying grenadier, but it is out of place. As I pointed out above, a narrative is not a representation. Bohnen should be describing the death, not dying himself. Incidentally he lets the tempo down so much at this point that the symphony at the end is rendered invertebrate and the song expires in nothingness. It is a pity that he should have spoilt his interpretation in this way. If he had stuck to the directness of the style he uses at the opening his fine voice and the clarity of his diction would have made it a very memorable performance. As it is, one is left with the impression that he does not really understand either the limitations or peculiar virtues of the "lied" form. On the reverse side of this record he has sung Wolfram's address from *Tannhäuser*, but it is not very satisfactory. He has not caught the magnificent positiveness of this outspoken declaration of Wolfram's love. It should be full of a tremendous virility and confidence. He has turned it into a plaint of weakness.

The two best records of this song are the French and Italian. The former is H.M.V., DB.311, by Journet, the famous French bass, and the latter is H.M.V., DB.242, by Titta Ruffo. Both of these singers are, of course, operatic, but their interpretations are remarkably straightforward and simple. Ruffo in particular, fine singer though he is, one would have hardly expected to make much of a song of this sort. Certainly one would expect more exaggeration from an Italian than from a German. Such, however, is not here the case. He starts off at almost the same speed as Bohnen, and exactly the same speed as Journet, but instead of continually breaking the rhythm as Bohnen does, he carries it forward with a fine impulse. He does this by means of his diction, and the effect is to tell the story clearly. It is a very good contrast to the other side of the record, which is *Nemico della Patria*, and a good example of Italian opera at its floridest and most extrovert.

Journet's record is doubly interesting. It is very well sung and it is in French. It sounds curious to hear such a song sung in French, for it is in a way typically German. On the other hand, there is a peculiar appropriateness in the fact that it is about Frenchmen, and includes the melody of the *Marseillaise*. In that connection it is amusing to note Journet's change of tone in the third phrase. I have never heard a Frenchman sing the *Marseil-*

*laise* who did not make a piano at that point. The habit has been too much for Journet, and he has succumbed to it although he is only singing the original melody and not the words. This, of course, is not a criticism against his interpretation. In that respect there is only one serious blot on the record, and that is the omission of the concluding symphony. That is unpardonable. As Schumann wrote it, so it should be sung, and I cannot understand a singer of such eminence so misunderstanding the song as a whole as to leave it out.

Let me refer to Plunket Greene in this connection and remind gramophonists of what he says in the book I have quoted above. He lays down the following rule in the form of two questions and two answers. "When does a singer begin to sing his song? At the first note played by the accompanist. When does he cease singing? At the last beat of the last note of the final symphony." He goes on ironically to put the following words into the mouth of a hack ballad-singing vocalist. "What could Schumann have meant by those preposterous chords at the end of *The Two Grenadiers*? Just after the *Marseillaise*—finished *ff* too! If the old soldier had had any gentlemanly feeling he would have broken a blood-vessel, or dropped dead some other way a few bars earlier, and given the singer a chance. If Schumann had only known the conditions he would surely have altered it; in the meantime better stick to the organ obbligato song as far safer." Yes; let them sing anything they like, let them pass by as many windows in as many quaint old-fashioned towns as they feel disposed; but if they sing Schumann let them sing what he wrote and not what they think he ought to have written. It is a thousand pities that Journet, who in every other respect gives an excellent interpretation, should have allowed "those preposterous chords" to be deleted.

There are two other foreign records: Polydor 66001, by Theodor Scheidl, and H.M.V., DB.102, by Chaliapin. Scheidl takes the song too slowly, and the effect is very heavy and dull. He has a good voice, but it lacks brilliance as much as the interpretation. On the other hand, the style is on the whole more like the true lieder singer's than most of the other records. There is not too much dramatic exaggeration, and the last verse is well sung. It will be observed, for instance, that he does not overstress the last syllable of "Kaiser" as much as most of the others. Chaliapin's record I find disappointing and unimpressive. In a critique of a concert which he gave not long ago, there is reference to *The Two Grenadiers* "sung in march time." In this record, however, the speed is much faster than that, and I should imagine that few grenadiers would care to march to it. The rhythm is not good, and it seems extraordinary that a man who could use rhythm as he did in



the record of *The Volga Boatsong* could so misuse it as he has in this case.

Of the three English records of the song which I have heard, Columbia 3547, H.M.V., D.215 and DB.438, the first and last are poor, but the second, sung by Harry Dearth, is not at all bad. The movement is good, and the interpretation direct and unexaggerated. There is a certain over-

emphasis on consonants at times, but the story is well told and the words are clearly heard. Whether the English translation is worth hearing is another matter. Translations are seldom entirely satisfactory; that, however, is a thorny question, and not to be discussed at the end of an article which, I feel, is already quite long enough.

JON DE YONG.

## The BAND of H.M. GRENADIER GUARDS

By W. A. CHISLETT

ALTHOUGH the Royal Regiment of Guards was founded by King Charles II., it was not until 1815 that the First Regiment of Foot Guards were distinguished by their present title of Grenadier Guards, which honour was conferred by H.R.H. The Prince Regent in commemoration of their having defeated the Grenadiers of the French Imperial Guard at the Battle of Waterloo.

On the original raising of the regiment in 1656, the only musicians were seven drummers, who were even without a drum major until 1662, but in 1674 one Peter Vanhausen was appointed to instruct one man in each company in the use of the fife. In 1685 the enlistment of twelve hautbois was authorised and the difficulty of granting these musicians higher pay was surmounted by the ingenious device of allowing the insertion of a fictitious name on the roll of each company of the regiment! By the middle of the eighteenth century the band had grown to such proportions and attained such proficiency as to be described by the famous Dr. Burney as "an excellent band," and it was during this period that the curious custom of importing coloured men to play the drum, tambourine, and "clash-pans" seems to have grown up. The *Musical Times* of March 1st, 1907, contains a reproduction of an old print (circa 1760) showing the band playing for the mounting of the guard at St. James's Palace, in which these gentlemen are well to the fore.

The foundation of the band as we now know it, and of its fame as one of the finest military bands in the world, was really laid by Dan Godfrey, who was appointed bandmaster in 1856. A young man of 25, full of enthusiasm, he was given more and more men and obtained better and better results, until he had a band of sixty-six musicians which soon became famous and, in addition to the performance of ceremonial and regimental duties, fulfilled many engagements. A tale is told that on one occasion the band played at a ball in a country mansion at which the men were lavishly entertained. On the way back to his lodgings early in the morning,

one of the trombone players, deciding that a nap was advisable, lay down under a hedge in a country lane. He was fast asleep when a bull, wandering down the lane, on catching sight of the scarlet uniform, bellowed loudly. The bandsman, partially awakened by what he thought was a familiar sound, murmured sleepily, "That isn't A." The bull bellowed a second time, whereupon the bandsman muttered, "No, and that's not A either." The bull, thoroughly annoyed by this time, then rushed at the hated scarlet figure and tossed it over the hedge into a field. Still half asleep and being unable to see what had disturbed him because of the hedge, the man rolled over, and as he dozed off again, said, "You may be a very strong fellow—that wasn't the argument—but you are no musician and never will be. *It wasn't A!*"

The fame of the band spread far and wide, and in 1872 Parliament were persuaded to allow a visit to be paid to America on the occasion of the International Peace Festival held at Boston in commemoration of the end of the Civil War. Unbounded enthusiasm was displayed and Dan Godfrey and his band were undoubtedly the heroes of the exhibition. Some of the performances at this festival must have been tremendously exciting. On one occasion 200 firemen, who had been trained to strike specially tuned anvils, played the melody in such pieces as the *Anvil Chorus* from *Il Trovatore* to the accompaniment of massed bands and choirs and batteries of artillery. The climax was reached on the last day, when P. S. Gilmore, an American musician with great experience in military band work, and who was in charge of the musical arrangements, conducted the massed bands and a huge chorus in *Rule Britannia*; Godfrey then took charge and led them in *The Star Spangled Banner*, and as a grand finale, Gilmore directed the bands and chorus and Godfrey led the audience in singing *God Save the Queen* and *My Country 'Tis of Thee*, the airs of which are the same. In order not to miss any available source of sound, added to the bands,



chorus, audience, anvils and guns were the chimes of all the churches in the city rung in time communicated by telegraph. Probably such a volume of musical sound has never been heard before or since, and while it is difficult to see how proper control could be maintained, the effect from all accounts seems to have been magnificent. Dan Godfrey was the first bandmaster to receive a commission, this honour being conferred upon him in June, 1887, and it was not until 1899 that any others were promoted to commissioned rank, in which year four were so honoured, including Charles Godfrey, the brother of Dan, and George Miller, the father of the present director of music of the Grenadier Guards.

On the retirement of Lieut. Godfrey, at the age of 65, in 1897, Albert Williams was promoted to the vacancy and under his direction the band again visited America. The visit was to fulfil an engagement at the St. Louis Exposition, and advantage was taken of the opportunity to visit many of the principal cities and towns in the United States and Canada. The prestige attained by the band on their previous visit was worthily upheld and even enhanced, and the tour was a triumphant success. Capt. Williams was the first army bandmaster to achieve the distinction of taking the degree of Doctor of Music at Oxford University, and it is pleasing to note that on the occasion of the formal conferring of the degree in 1906, the whole of the band showed their appreciation of the honour and respect for their leader by voluntarily attending the ceremony.

The present director of music, Lieut. George Miller, L.R.A.M., who received the appointment in October, 1921, was brought up in a musical atmosphere, for his father was bandmaster of the Royal Marines at Portsmouth (in which position he ultimately attained the rank of major) and his grandfather was bandmaster of the Manchester Regiment. As a child of 8 he was admitted to the Royal Chapel at Windsor as a chorister, and for the next seven years sang at all the royal marriages and other State functions, ultimately becoming head and solo boy. At the age of 15, in 1893, the youth went to Germany to complete his education and for three years was a student at the Königlische Kapelmeister Aspirante Schule. On returning to England the next step was to enlist in the 60th Rifles, shortly after which he qualified for and was admitted to Kneller Hall, the famous army school of music. After completing this course, he obtained the post of bandmaster to the 32nd Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. He served in the South African War with his regiment, but was recalled from Cape Town in 1902 to form the newly sanctioned Royal Artillery Band at Portsmouth. The young bandmaster raised this band to such a high pitch of efficiency in five years,

that on the vacancy occurring in 1907, he was promoted to the directorship of the 1st Life Guards Band with which he remained until he succeeded to the blue riband of musical appointments in the army, which he now holds.

Once more the band has been fortunate in securing the services of one who is worthily upholding the glorious traditions of the past and adding to its musical efficiency. I do not know whether Lieut. Miller has read the American press reports quoted in Sir Dan Godfrey's "Memories and Music," comparing the Grenadiers' Band with a band of a German Grenadier Regiment, which was also present at the Boston Festival of 1872. The quotation is of some length, but the general effect of it is that the British band was undoubtedly superior, because the brass was subordinated to the reeds, resulting in a refined orchestral tone, whereas in the German band the brass tone quite outweighed that of the reeds. Whether or not he has read either the reports or the extracts quoted in this book, this seems to be the ideal which he has set before himself. Well-balanced refined tone is what we hear when Lieut. Miller is in charge of his band. He is not a demonstrative conductor and if any one thing can be said to characterise his interpretations, it is extreme flexibility. Were it not for the success attained, one might be inclined to say that his looseness of wrist in conducting is exaggerated, but the result is what matters, and there can be no other opinion than that the effect of this looseness is a delightfully free and flexible reading though there is no trace of raggedness.

More than one company have issued records by this band, but those of the Columbia Company are the most recently recorded, and the best, and of these my own two favourites are the "1812" Overture and *The Beggars Opera Selection*. Other splendid records are the selections from *The Mastersingers* and *Eugene Onegin*, the *Egyptian Ballet Suite*, Holst's *First Suite in E flat*, and *Martial Moments*, and at the risk of reiteration I would remind lovers of band records that most of the old 12in. records of this band have been re-recorded recently, a complete list of which was given in the August number of THE GRAMOPHONE.

The war record of the regiment, as everyone knows, is a long and gallant one, and the members of the band contributed their quota to this. Since the war, in addition to their share of ceremonial duties and parades which have to be performed by the various regiments of Foot Guards, the band of the Grenadier Guards has toured throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain, and wherever it goes it is assured of a warm welcome from the musical public, not because of its past, but because of its present excellence.

W. A. CHISLETT.



## A GRAND NATIONAL NIGHT

IT was Sergeant Murphy's year. Wild excitement was in the air, for the victory of the gallant old chestnut after having been placed four times previously, was vastly popular. The new Adelphi Hotel that night was packed with glad people; they seemed to be dining everywhere; there was no room for the waiters to move between the tables, and as the evening wore on the restaurant and ballroom

the bulk and the smile of Paul Whiteman, and at a flick of the baton the music started. In five minutes everyone in that huge room had heard the news that this was the famous man and the famous band who had landed from America that evening and were on their way to London.

So I was privileged to hear the first tune played by Paul Whiteman's Band on English soil. It was



PAUL WHITEMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA

were full of brilliant favours and coloured streamers to add to the Bacchanalian gaiety of the dancers, the dresses, clamour and laughter. On a little platform where the band was playing Mr. Blackwell, the trainer of Sergeant Murphy, was to be seen dancing a *pas seul*, a gentle, almost a venerable, figure, stepping and pirouetting with a grave and benevolent hilarity. It was all great fun and full of good humour.

After one of the dances the band dispersed and mysteriously great arcs of wood were brought in and fitted on to the stage to enlarge it. Something was happening, was going to happen. Everyone was on tiptoe, and the ballroom was filled with surmise. Presently the band trooped back—no, not the band; a new band, men with strange instruments in their arms; more men, more and more men, till even the enlarged stage was crammed with them. Last of all, on the front edge of it appeared

one of those thrilling unexpected incidents which glow in memory for a life-time; for the setting of the scene was ideal in an atmosphere of excitement, and the playing, the rhythm, the noise, the perfect ensemble, the jolly humour of the whole party were such as had never been heard in this country before. Old men and women danced that night who had never dreamed that they would take the floor again; everyone in the place was dance mad.

I have heard most of the great American bands that have since come to England, but none have ever touched the heights reached by Whiteman on that golden night. And now that he is coming again with the April showers to rejuvenate our jaded hearts, and is to play—bless him—in the Albert Hall on the 12th before he starts on a provincial tour. I wonder whether he will have the same power over me? But I dare not miss the chance of renewing the rapture.

C.R.S.



# THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

By C. S. DAVIS

## I.—“Gramofiddlesticks,” or, How a Gramophone Journal *Should* Be Run

EDITORIAL.

VLADIVOSTOCK, April, 1926.

ONCE again I must crave your forgiveness for the haste and brevity with which these notes must perforce be written. For some time now I have been living at an abnormal rate; my two new plays, “Riot” and “The Celestial Stairway,” are both due for production in a fortnight, and so far only the titles have been written, although I am writing over a million words a day; in addition to which the weather in these quarters is not nearly so propitious as it might be. So far as this month’s records are concerned, however, let me beg and implore of you not to miss the perfectly exquisite Marcus Gallia Symphony. I admit it is a little above the usual length and price: there are 23 records altogether at a cost of fifteen guineas, but, believe me, if you have to go without your Larranagas and Heidsieck for a week in order to obtain the set, you will thank me afterwards with tears of gratitude in your eyes for my recommendation. Apart from this, there has been little else of interest this month except a few snippets, and I am heartily sick of consigning the perpetrators of these primeval atrocities to the nether regions; it is like bombing a fortress with pebbles.

Vermicelli’s English is as bad as an organ-grinder’s, and his sibilants are simply execrable; why these Italians don’t stick to Esperanto I can’t for the life of me make out. The Strumann piano record was very disappointing; the recording is vile and reminds me of a barmaid collecting glasses for the final round just before closing time. If this is new recording . . . However, I shall have a good deal to say about the matter and several others of imminent importance to gramophiles next month.

### OPERA AS IT USED TO BE.

BY THE OLD STAGER.

One experienced last night at Covent Garden a mild hush of expectancy among the eager audience which awaited the appearance of Marya Lubitschka, the new Croatian soprano, who made her operatic début in England in the rôle of Gilda in Rigoletto. For myself, I was a little disappointed in the diva’s singing; perhaps the reports of Madame Lubitschka’s many triumphs on the Continent had made me too expectant. On the other hand, I could not help recalling the many famous Gildas of past generations who have passed across that historic stage.

I remember how, over forty years ago, the most wonderful of all coloraturas—the great Tutti Garotti—held the whole house spellbound with the glory of her superb vocalism and acting. Never have I heard such a profoundly beautiful piece of singing; never have I heard anything to equal the consummate ease with which those faultless cadenzas seemed to flow like pure gold from an inexhaustible fount of liquid melody. During the whole of that performance you could have heard a pin drop. When the curtain rose after the last act and Garotti bowed in gracious acknowledgment of the enthusiastic plaudits of the admiring listeners, it was, indeed, difficult to distinguish the prima donna from the sea of magnificent bouquets which surrounded her.

Again, I remember, two years later, the remarkable début of Lydia Komova, the young Russian ingénue—probably the most youthful diva who has played this rôle in the history of grand opera, and whose fame was eclipsed only by the greater celebrity of Garotti. If lack of experience was against her, Komova certainly compensated for this by the amazing energy and vitality she imparted to her work, while the degree of *chiaroscuro* she exhibited was truly astonishing.

However, I shall discuss Lubitschka’s performance in detail in next month’s article.

### BEDSIDE BROODINGS: GRAMOTECHNICS FOR TYROS.

BY GENERAL W. P. WILBARN.

Here is a simple formula, the application of which will prove of considerable help to those who possess gramophones suffering from bad needle alignment, irregular tracking, bronchial catarrh, or creeping paralysis.

Let  $p$  = pivoting angle of stylus bar; let  $r$  = radial curvature of tone-arm in tracking position; and let  $x$  = centrifugal force at record periphery.

Then:

$$\text{Degree of Error at zero} = \frac{\sin x (pr^2 \times px^2r)}{p^2 r^2 x^2 - \sqrt{pr^2}}$$

From which it will be seen quite obviously that the small or “brilliant” type of sound-box is totally unsuited for use in conjunction with a large tone-chamber, unless the latter be of the floating horn variety completely surrounded by a vacuum immersed in oxalic acid.

Anyone having the slightest doubt about the matter can easily try the experiment for himself!



## ADVICE TO THE NOUVEAUX RICHES.

BY "BOURGEOIS MINOR."

Remember, a man is judged by the company he keeps—and the records he buys. Expensive records are not necessarily the best, but they are always the most desirable for those who have to consider appearances and maintain caste. Never under any circumstances choose a record costing less than 8s. 6d., and never patronise shops where cheap and vulgar makes are stocked. Again, the manner in which you purchase your records is of paramount importance. Having selected the most aristocratic music establishment in your locality, enter the gramophone department, and with the head tilted well back at an angle of 45 degrees proceed to interrupt the manager or proprietor in the course of serving another customer. Then, assuming your best Oxford accent you should say: "Oh, ah, do you stock His Ma-aster's V-oyce Records? . . . I should like to heah some good celebrity records; have you any new ones by Kr-ai-sler? . . . I just adoah his playing, you know . . . unless you think, ah, H-ai-fitz better."

Command the use of the best audition room and try at least twenty or thirty records, keeping an assistant running backwards and forwards to the racks for fresh supplies as required. Do not definitely purchase any records that day, but tell the manager as you prepare to leave the shop, "I have selected two perfectly priceless records—to choose from; I will let you know which one I have decided to, er, acquire next time I am in town—in the cah . . . Good day." In this way you cannot fail to make an impression with dealers—they just love it!

## THE COLISEUM.

(A place in the sun—and St. Martin's Lane—devoted to the unwanted contributions of "stars" who prefer to remain anonymous.—ED.)

## HOW "THE MOLLIPHONE" CURED THE MEASLES.

BY AN EX-GRAMOPHOBE.

I used to hate gramophones—until quite recently. Two years ago my little boy, aged three, suffered from a very severe attack of measles; poor little chap, he really was very ill, and my doctor drew my attention to an interesting little book in which a famous bacteriologist described how the effects of rheumatoid arthritis had been successfully combated by the soothing harmonies of a symphonic poem by Richard Strauss.

That day I bought a Molliphone, an exact replica of the model supplied to the Maharajah of Kandypeel, and installed it in the sickroom. From the moment the instrument was delivered my little boy seemed to take a turn for the better. Of course, we played good music, as the writer had expressly stipulated in his book that only music of a soulful and uplifting character was suitable, and, strange as it may sound, each symphony accounted for the disappearance of a spot.

Thus in a very short time the Molliphone cured my little boy of the measles; but, what is even more important than this, it laid the foundation of a remarkable musical training. In the short space of six weeks he knew by heart the whole of

the *Ring*, the 48 preludes and fugues, and the major works of Layton and Johnstone. Since then the progress he has made is simply astonishing, and he is now (at the age of 5) able to follow string quartets and symphonies with the score and is a regular subscription reader of THE GRAMOPHONE.

## THE INCONSTANT NYMPH.

(With apologies to Margaret Kennedy.)

I used to love the silky sound  
Of fibre needles gliding round  
The shining grooves upon the track;  
I used to swear till white was black  
That nothing else could e'er atone  
For fibres' sweet and hallowed tone;  
I used to dote on gum and dope,  
And even found a use for soap  
To polish up each "great white hope";  
Until, alas, one fateful day,  
Some friends came round to hear me play  
A new electric H.M.V.  
(A "record find" undoubtedly),  
When to my absolute dismay  
The beastly, blighted point gave way.

So now, since fickle fibre fails,  
I'm using neolithic "nails."

JILTED.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

(Letters should be as loquacious as possible, but the Editor reserves the right to submit any communications from outraged inventors or unacknowledged geniuses to the Lunacy Commissioners or the Board of Inland Revenue.)

## SHOULD GRAMOPHILES MARRY?

(To the Editor.)

SIR,—I have read with very great interest the Editor's striking article on Confucianism *v.* Darwinism as applied to gramophone reproduction, which, as Mr. MacConnachie rightly points out, really boils down to a matter of religion. The question therefore naturally arises where different professions of faith are involved, as to whether gramophiles holding conflicting spiritual views should marry. We all know how many homes have been wrecked through mixed marriages. Surely the tragedy of mixed sound-boxes would be no less appalling. But perhaps you would let us have your views on the subject in a future issue, and so earn the grateful thanks of  
A SOUND-BOX CELIBATE.

## A SOUND-BOX S.O.S.

(To the Editor.)

SIR,—I wonder if any of your readers can help me. I am experiencing some difficulty in finding a sound-box to suit my instrument. It is a cabinet gramophone of no particular make. I converted an old washstand, fixing the marble slab at the back to act as a sounding board. The internal horn has been made of plasticine, and is sprayed by means of a hose-pipe connected to the bathroom tap. The tone-arm is specially shaped like a letter X and is made of hornite coated with robillac and covered with fadeless cretonne. I have tried most standard makes of sound-boxes, but so far find one of my own construction fitted with an oval, serrated stone diaphragm the most successful. I have not heard anything to compare with it on high sopranos and accordions, but it is a little shrill on xylophone solos. Can you suggest anything better?

Yours, etc.,

A PUZZLED READER.

## REVIEWS.

Owing to an unfortunate dispute between the Record Reviewers Union and the Federated Society of Workless Editors regarding the time allotted for needle changing during reviewing hours, record reviews have unavoidably been held over till next month.

C. S. DAVIS.



# ARMCHAIR PHONATICS

By P. WILSON

## XII.—The Flexible Connector (*continued*)

MY experiments with the Lifebelt led me to inquire into some early efforts to apply the principle of flexibility to the sound-box connection. One of the most instructive was in the rubber back of the Exhibition sound-box. Those of us who have studied the construction of the original (U.S.A.) examples of that box must confess to a profound respect and admiration for its designer. Every part of it seems to have been most carefully thought out, even to the extent of its use with a goose-neck which has a "dead end." I have long been convinced that the use of a goose-neck in that form was no mere accident or concession to convenience. Of this I shall have more to say on a future occasion. I will only remark now that, in view of the ease with which a goose-neck without "dead end" can be designed and manufactured, it would indeed be strange if the man who designed the Exhibition sound-box had not also some very good reason for using that form of goose-neck. The successors and copyists of this inventor, however, do not seem to have appreciated many of the achievements embodied in the Exhibition combination, with the result that the later examples and copies fail in some important respects. The use of the rubber back is one illustration in point, though there are several others. It seems to have been assumed that the only function of the rubber was to "insulate" the tone-arm from the shell of the sound-box and so prevent the metallic transmission of vibrations. There is no doubt, of course, that the rubber has that function. But the quality of the rubber used in the Exhibition, and the fact that the back was attached to the shell by two screws only, and those disposed vertically, strongly suggest that the inventor had definite ideas about the value of flexibility. To this day the rubber backs used by the Gramophone Co. are more flexible than those which one can buy independently. Moreover, by using two screws only the inventor was running the risk of the connection not being airtight. Would he have done so unless he had some very good reason?

Another example of flexibility was contained in the old Pathé sound-box which had a rubber tube attached to its back. In later models this was dropped, largely, I suppose, owing to the perishable nature of rubber. Coming to more recent times, we find the same principle embodied in the Algramophone, where the amount of flexibility, at any rate in the models which I have examined, is quite considerable. The Sonat boxes which are sold

independently are connected to the tone-arm by a short rubber tube of exceptionally good quality for that particular purpose. One of the most interesting examples, however, is provided by the Columbia No. 7 sound-box. There we get a thin steel plate screwed to the shell and the back plate is attached to the steel plate by screws which are "staggered"; that is, they are fixed at an angle, relative to the centre of the plate, with those connecting the plate to the shell. An air-tight joint is obtained by means of a soft rubber anchoring-ring between the back plate and the shell. I gather from the Columbia patent that the steel plate was used in this way in order to give the sound-box a modicum of flexibility. But the recovery seems to me to be too quick, and the damping of unwanted impulses too small. I have obtained what I consider to be much more satisfactory results by removing the steel plate altogether. In the screw holes to which that plate was attached I have inserted longer screws, passing through the holes in the back plate and having fairly large heads. Under the heads of those screws I put small spiral springs (magneto brush springs, or Bassett-Lowke model loco piston springs are excellent for the purpose), which press against the back plate. The quality of the flexibility can be modified by the use of different spiral springs and by the amount by which they are compressed. Conical springs would probably be better than the ordinary cylindrical ones, but these I have been unable to obtain as yet.

The same method can be used to make the Cliftophone flexible, and some of my correspondents have reported distinct improvements by this means. The back of the Cliftophone sound-box is rigidly attached by four screws to a flange at the end of the tone-arm. I suggested to my correspondents that they should remove these screws and insert a soft rubber umbrella ring of large size between the flange and the back. Then screw up, but not too tightly, by means of screws about half an inch longer than the original ones, placing small spiral springs, as previously described, between the flange and the heads of the screws. For the best results there should be a substantial clearance between the screws and the holes in the flange. This can be obtained either by widening the holes or by thinning down the screws with a file at the places where they go through the flange. In the first instance, I advise the latter method, since it involves no permanent alteration to the machine.



# CREDE EXPERTO

## A Current Survey of Gramophone Progress

### By OUR EXPERT COMMITTEE

#### IX.—THE "NEW RECORDING."

WE have received a number of requests for an analysis of the achievements and possibilities of the new system of recording. We feel that it is rather early to give anything more than a tentative opinion; there has been too much extravagant talk both in praise and in depreciation of the new system. However, we shall try to give a sane and balanced description of the features which strike us as significant and of the developments we anticipate. It will be understood that some of our remarks may need considerable modification in the near future.

It would be well, perhaps, at the start to describe briefly some of the properties of musical sounds. It has often been pointed out in these pages that a note produced by a voice or musical instrument is rarely simple. It is usually a combination of "tones" which vary both in loudness and in pitch. The tone of lowest pitch generally determines the *pitch* of the sound which we hear, whilst the tones of higher pitch determine its *quality*. The tone of lowest pitch is known as the "fundamental" and the other tones as "overtones" or "upper partials." Thus sounds of the same pitch produced by a violin, a flute, an oboe, etc., have different qualities because the relative intensities of the overtones are different in each case.

The pitches of the overtones usually bear a definite relation to the pitch of the fundamental. Thus, if the pitch of the fundamental is taken as 1, those of the overtones are 2 (the octave), 3 (the twelfth), 4 (the double-octave), and so on. In this case the overtones are said to be "harmonics." Thus the harmonics of middle C (256 vibrations a second) are:—

$2 \times 256 = 512$	vibrations a second	(octave),
$3 \times 256 = 768$	"	" (twelfth),
$4 \times 256 = 1024$	"	" (double-octave)
$5 \times 256 = 1280$	"	"

and so on.

The octave, double-octave, etc., are said to be "even harmonics," since the multipliers are even numbers. When the multiplier is an odd number, as in the twelfth, the overtone is said to be an "odd harmonic."

In most musical notes the overtones are harmonic, but it is possible to get "clang-tones" from some instruments (*e.g.*, a bell) which are "inharmonic" to the fundamental; that is to say, their frequencies are not that of the fundamental multiplied by *whole* numbers; one may, for example, be 6.25 times that of the fundamental.

The note of a tuning fork, the gently-blown lower notes of the flute, and the notes from wide, gently-blown flute pipes of organs are almost simple in character, the overtones present being few and feeble. With the clarinet the seventh, eighth, and ninth harmonics are prominent, but other harmonics are of importance. With the violin the first four or five harmonics are the most powerful, but, generally speaking, the higher the harmonic the less the intensity. Notes in which overtones abound are full of character even to the extent of sharpness and shrillness; those in which they are few and faint are soft and sweet but lacking in character. As many as sixteen to twenty harmonics have been detected in some bass voices, whilst in some instrumental notes more than twenty harmonics have been found.

We have not space to carry this description further on this occasion. What we wish to emphasise here is the fact that when an instrument is playing tones which vary in frequency from hundreds to thousands of vibrations per second are being produced simultaneously. When a full orchestra is playing the range of frequency is from about fifty to about 20,000 vibrations a second. Recording and reproducing instruments have therefore to respond to a large number of different pitches at one and the same time. Moreover, the tones reproduced by the gramophone have to be present in the same proportions and relative strengths as those of the original performance. If this is not the case, the reproduction is distorted. When one thinks of the delicacy of the problem here presented, one is amazed that the gramophone should be able to give even a colourable imitation of a musical performance.

The first difficulty is the fact that any body which is capable of transmitting vibrations, whether it be a diaphragm, a horn, a column of air, or even a needle, has one or more natural frequencies of its own. If the "forced vibration" which it has



to transmit happens to correspond with one of those natural frequencies then it will be reinforced out of all proportion; the transmitting body will, in fact, act towards that tone as a resonator. It follows that the different parts of a recording instrument and the different parts of a reproducing instrument may emphasise tones of certain pitches and so fail to transmit equally from the top to the bottom of the scale.

The old system of recording used horns and vibrating diaphragms, and records were made by a process of trial and error. By the use of different horns and different diaphragms for different voices, instruments, and vocal and instrumental combinations, records were produced in which the distortion was greatest where its importance was least. Even so, it cannot be denied that to get the best reproduction with the old type of record, different sound-boxes and even different styles of gramophone are necessary for different types of records. By matching the reproducing combination to the recording combination for any particular record, distortion may be corrected or reduced to a minimum. The majority of people are content to get good average results with one machine. But fundamentally, the gramomaniac with his three or four machines and his multitude of sound-boxes has been right.

In the old system of recording, then, no scientific attempt was made to obtain from the recording instrument a *level* response over a wide range of pitch. The results were most adequate in those cases where the reproducing instrument tended to suppress any distortion in the recording. The distortion due to the recording diaphragm can be corrected in this way, but that due to the recording horn cannot so easily be eradicated. The records which were most inadequate were precisely those where horn effects were most likely to cause trouble. Speaking generally, the human voice and solo instruments could be recorded and reproduced remarkably well; but the organ, piano, orchestra and choir were comparative failures.

The new system of recording is founded on a totally different basis. Here a deliberate attempt is being made to get the recording instrument to respond evenly to a wide range of pitch. At present the response can be made reasonably level from about fifty to about 5,000 vibrations per second. Where low frequencies are concerned this is much better than has ever been possible before, but, so far as our observations go, the higher frequencies are not so satisfactory as in the old system. As time goes on, however, the range will no doubt be extended. Experience in balancing the recording instrument will in any case lead to more uniform results.

From a theoretical point of view, then, we have no doubt that the new system is a definite advance

upon the old. A scientific system which has for its objective the prevention of distortion should be capable of greater development than one which regards distortion as inevitable and merely sets out to limit it empirically. Substantial progress has already been made and we look confidently to still greater progress during the next twelve months. We shall be surprised if the reproduction of sound in a few years' time is not superior to any that the most optimistic gramophile has hitherto thought possible.

There are marked practical advantages attaching to the new system. We have already commented on the difficulty of avoiding horn distortion in recording the organ, piano, orchestra and choir. But this was not the only difficulty. Spatial restrictions upon the performers were if anything even more important. One reason why we could not get a full orchestral effect was that a full orchestra could not be satisfactorily grouped round the horn in the recording room. Moreover, the players were cramped and the room was often uncomfortably hot, so that good work was exceedingly difficult. The new system has altered all this. It is now possible to record an actual performance in Westminster Abbey, the Albert Hall, the Queen's Hall, the Old Vic., or almost anywhere. Better playing and better "atmosphere" are not the least of the good things promised us.

So much, then, for the possibilities of the new system. What can we say of its present achievements? It is no exaggeration to say that the first examples took the gramophone world by storm. Here at last was a foretaste of something for which we had all hoped, longingly but without much assurance. But the products of the next few months were disappointing. Those of us who have developed a highly (if not hyper) critical habit of mind began to go back on our first impressions. The atmosphere is better, but the tonal quality is still lacking in fidelity. Apart from jazz, the greatest improvement of all has been with choirs, and it is significant that with a choir the *individual* quality of each voice matters little so long as the ensemble is good. Undoubtedly, the products of the new recording have not yet been so successful as some of us anticipated. Perhaps this is because the gramophone combinations which reproduce the old records most adequately are not altogether suitable for records made under the new system. The reproduction with some of them is often clanky and patchy, sometimes thin and wiry, and usually nasal in character. Whether experience in recording will remove these faults or whether an entirely new system of reproducing will be necessary only time can show. Some points in this connection seem to be tolerably clear, but we must leave the discussion of these to a future article.



# TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

## A Slogan

Have you noticed our slogan, "Every number is a record number," which appears on the posters which we distribute every month to dealers? (If your dealer or bookstall manager does not display it, please persuade him to do so.) This slogan was invented by the Editor. But we are indebted to a reader, Mr. H. A. Course, for the suggestion of a slogan for the Lifebelt: "TAKE A LIFE BELT WITH YOU ON THE HIGH C'S."

## H.M.V. in Australia

A reader in Australia sends a newspaper cutting which describes the opening ceremony of the new H.M.V. factory at Erskineville in enthusiastic terms. It is evidently equipped with the thoroughness that one would expect. But the chief pleasure in reading the report was to hear news again of Mr. Manson, to whom we bade farewell when he left Oxford Street last summer, and to find that his "beautifully cultivated voice" is appreciated down under.

## The Banjulele

The ukulele is the national instrument of the Hawaiians, a four-stringed affair with a soft plaintive tone. It is handy to play, but musically it has distinct limitations; and two brothers, Albin and Kelvin Keech, who were familiar with it from childhood on Waikiki Beach, devised what is known as the Banjulele Banjo, with an improved sound-chamber and with strings tuned to the upper A, to D, to F sharp and to B. This instrument is slightly larger than the ukulele, has a much louder and rounder tone, and is being manufactured extensively in factories in London and Birmingham. A great deal of its popularity—a charm to its player, a menace to his family—is due to the fact that it is astonishingly easy to play; and Mr. Alvin Keech has invented a new kind of music score which is said to resemble a "noughts and crosses" diagram, "immediately readable by the veriest novice." Serenaders please note.

## The Music Bulletin

This is the organ of the British Music Society (6s. 6d. a year, 117, Great Portland Street, London, W.), a lively publication, in the March issue of which Mr. Laurence Binyon made his "confession." John Masefield is to contribute some poems to the next number, and Wesley's fiftieth anniversary will be marked by an article from Sir Richard Terry.

## Wagner

Mr. Peter Latham is to give a talk on Wagner to the members of the South-East London Recorded Music Society on the evening of April 8th, and accommodation will be reserved as far as possible for any of our readers who will write to the Secretary, Mr. Ernest Baker, 34, Chalsey Road, Brockley, S.E. 4.

This "talk" is opportune; for Mr. Latham, who recently contributed the articles on Wagner's operas to Mr. Paul England's "Fifty Favourite Operas," has been studying Wagner records, and the first of a series of articles on the subject will appear in our May issue and will be heralded by a coloured portrait of the composer, which promises to be as successful as our first venture in this direction, the Mozart portrait issued as an Art Supplement to the December number and still available separately on application to the London Office.

## A Correction

Mr. Herman Klein writes:—I was not quite right about the sister-in-law for whom Mozart wrote the part of the Queen of Night. It was, indeed, for Josepha, not Aloysia Weber, that he did so; but the former was always known as Mme. Hofer, and so named in the original cast. (With apologies to Mr. Paul England.)

## New Readers

Every month we have new readers, thank goodness. Some of them must think THE GRAMOPHONE a little mad. One of them, last month, was astonished because we told him that a Lifebelt was not likely to be of much use to his particular gramophone; but our candour, he wrote, was refreshing.

## These Charming People

The following letter, addressed to the Parlophone Company, from Secondee, is rescued from the oblivious files:—

DEAR SIRs,—About two years ago been searching for one who is able to select me some Latin records of which all proves in vain. But about two days ago, I was instructed by someone in reference to your skilful manoeuvre to invent such songs on records. To your honourable favour to increase yourself on the following latins, viz.:—

Asperges me etc., Widi Aquam etc., Santus, santus, santus etc. Agnus Dei etc., Requiem askernam dona eis etc. Miseremini mei etc., O salutaris Kostia and Tantum ergo sacramentum etc.

Of which if you dare to try the whole mentioned above, I shall try to do everything with you, for either in trading or anything.

So please be kind enough to send me their lists.

Your propitious reply is awaited.

I am yours trully,

## Suggestions

The binding problem already begins to loom ahead and the breakers are visible. A new reader, Mr. L. P. Clarke, declares that the numbering of the pages of Translations (which are often cut out and pasted in albums) consecutively will land us in a muddle at the end of the volume. Some pages will be missing. He also would prefer two extra pages of articles to the coloured Mozart supplement (December) of which "the cost of printing is probably high." It is, Mr. Clarke! But his reason for deprecating it is that it is going to cost him several shillings to frame it decently. "On the other hand," he writes, "the caricature of Vladimir de Pachmann in the November issue is delightful and well worth framing cheaply in passe-partout to hang in a 'den'."

A thing is not worth criticising unless it is good, and we accept these devastating problems as a proof of good will, which our correspondent expressly intended them to be.

## The Peridulce

Captain Barnett's survey of last year's gramophone progress, by which, in January, he brought his invaluable "Gramophone Tips" up to date, was tinged with an amiable reluctance to express outright what must have been at the back of his mind when he wrote about "Saxophone Horns," the new H.M.V. No. 4, the Lifebelt, etc. He must have been thinking that the Peridulce machine, built to his designs by the Murdoch Trading Co., foreshadowed all subsequent developments or else made them unnecessary. In fairness let us say that he is not alone in his opinion. One of our readers, Mr. J. A. Pierson of Burnham, wrote in November to say that after careful tests of the new H.M.V. against his Peridulce he left the shop with a "Give me my Peridulce every time." He wrote that "given good records, the Peridulce is at present unbeatable in a small room, though being a smallish instrument one cannot compare it with a thing like the Balmain. I was particularly pleased to find that the Peridulce produced the bass quite as well as the new instrument as far as I could judge, while the treble seemed to me more natural in the case of strings and soprano voices. I suppose the proper production of the bass is due to the large sound-box, which should prove that yards of gas-piping wound up like a euphonium inside the cabinet are not necessary."

## Thoughts on Music

There is a story of a certain Dean overheard saying at a dinner party:—"I only know of two good things that ever came from Colchester—Cant's roses and a book about children by a man named Hervey Elwes." The worthy Dean—they are all worthy, but of what?—can now add *Thoughts on Music*, which is the greatest of the three.

## Orchorsol

Independently of the Editor, the Expert Committee is busy testing the new Orchorsol sound-box. It is a small box and has a rubber tube to give it the quality of flexibility. This was no doubt a feature incorporated in the designs for the new sound-box long



before the Editor proclaimed the Lifebelt principle last November; and just as the Orchorsol people were emphasising the importance of correct needle-track alignment before Mr. Wilson elucidated the theory in THE GRAMOPHONE, so they are marching in step with us over this question of flexibility. We can without affectation congratulate the Orchorsol Company and ourselves on this sympathetic development; for the gramophone which has won our gold medal in open competition for two consecutive years must be a most desirable companion in the broken country of gramophone design.

### And E.M.G.

The designer of the E.M.G. gramophones on the other hand, has been the first to adopt the Lifebelt in its entirety and the weight adjuster described in these columns by Mr. Wilson as standard equipment of all E.M.G. models. Naturally, we consider this an obvious and sensible course to adopt and we should like to see other makers fitting the Lifebelt and weight adjuster to every machine that they send out.

### E. J. Impey

No less than three readers wrote to us for the address of the author of the first letter in the Correspondence last month, so that they might send him some records. We sent it, but apparently it was a wrong address, as a parcel of records was returned to the sender by the Post Office. Will therefore Mr. Impey, if this catches his eyes send us his full address, please?

### More Plain Chant

The enterprise of the Parlophone Company in issuing three more records of the Plain Chant Melodies, as given in the Catholic Schools Hymn Books, is to be commended—not only by Catholics all over the world, but by church music lovers of all denominations. Sung by members of the Westminster Cathedral Choir, accompanied by the Rev. Lancelot Long, B.Mus., the “Three Antiphones of Our Lady” and the passages from the *Missa pro Defunctis* (including *Dies Irae, Dies Illa*), have a certain authority of interpretation; and at the modest price of half-a-crown each they should be widely welcomed. If only a record of noble music could definitely prove itself a best seller at this price! The catalogue numbers are E.3211, 3212 and 3213.

### Boston G. S.

We publish a letter this month from Boston in answer to Mr. H. L. Wilson's challenge about American taste in music; and from an independent source have received printed particulars of a Special Meeting of the Boston Gramophone Society on March 3rd. Evidently this society is conducted on much the same lines as ours in England, and is being supported by the trade most generously. We wish it a brilliant future and hope that many other societies with a similar purpose, “to bring together persons interested in the better grade of music as represented by phonographic recordings,” may spring up in America. The temporary secretary is Mr. Axel B. Johnson, 64, Hyde Park Avenue, Boston, Mass.



# National Gramophonic Society Notes

(All communications should be addressed to The Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1)

## Subscriptions

It is extremely important that the conditions of membership, of which a few people seem to be unaware, should be clearly understood. *No one can be allowed under any circumstances to join the Society for less than one year.* The present system of half-yearly and monthly payments makes it possible to default before the year is ended. If this arrangement, which was initiated entirely for the convenience of members, be thus abused it will, of course, become necessary to return to the old system of yearly subscriptions, to be paid in one lump sum at the beginning of the year. We should be extremely reluctant to do this, but it may become necessary through no fault of our own. The society can only exist if we are certain that all members will take all records issued during the year.

\* \* \*

## Half-yearly Payments

These should be made *at the beginning* of each half-year in question. Except under special circumstances records cannot be sent to members whose subscriptions are in arrears. The second half-year began on March 25th.

\* \* \*

## Policy

Thanks are due to those members who have been kind enough to give their opinion on the paragraph headed “Policy” in the January number, page 383. If these letters may be taken as representative it seems that, while some would prefer to leave matters entirely to the committee, most would like to receive a voting list by which the committee is to be guided, and that a large proportion of the programme should still depend upon the votes of members.

## Elgar

The test records of the Elgar *Piano Quintet*, played by Ethel Hobday and the Spencer Dyke String Quartet, have been passed by the committee, and all haste will be made to prevent members from having to wait long before these are received.

Mr. John F. Porte, author of “Sir Edward Elgar,” has very kindly promised to write an analytical note.

\* \* \*

## Purcell

The Purcell *Fantasies* have been recorded by the Music Society String Quartet. The first records were made at the beginning of the year during the very cold spell of weather, which unfortunately affected the wax and caused delays. The discs affected have been re-recorded, but at present nothing definite can be promised about the date of issue.

\* \* \*

## Tokio Meikyoku Records Seisaku Hampu Kai

The Western N.G.S. has now a sister in the East. Its name is as above and means “Tokio Good Record Recording and Distributing Society,” address, c/o M. Anan & Co., No. 4, Awajicho 2-chome, Kanda, Tokio, Japan. It was established in 1925 and has 385 members.

The first issue was Scriabine's IX. and X. *Piano Sonatas*, played by Alexander Sienkiewicz, on three 12in. records at 5 Y.'s each (presumably Yens).

Further information can, no doubt, be obtained from the secretary. We received a letter and two circulars, but the latter were printed entirely in Japanese characters.



## CORRESPONDENCE

*De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.*

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

## THOSE COMPLETE WORKS.

*(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)*

DEAR SIR,—While sympathising to a certain extent with Mr. H. L. Taylor and other correspondents in their plea for reduction in price of complete works, it seems to me that their arguments are rather one-sided and inclined to ignore the position of the manufacturers.

After all, the production of records is a commercial affair, and the record companies are entitled to a fair margin of profit. It must not be forgotten that they have to provide for dealers' profits, factors' profits, advertising (in which is included a colossal printing bill for the lavish supply of catalogues and other literature), and distributing services from the price of each record sold before they touch a penny to reimburse themselves for their manufacturing costs, depreciation of plant, "dead" stock, payment of artists, royalties, wages, taxes, etc. When all this has been met they can commence thinking about profits! I hold no brief for the companies; but there are two sides to every question, and they are not in the game for the fun of the thing!

I am not endowed with a vast quantity of this world's goods, and my acquisition of complete works is fraught with serious consideration and effort. But I cannot honestly say that I think 6s. 6d. per disc an excessive charge for, say, a work like the Brahms *A minor String Quartet*. I, for one, do not expect to get a superb rendition of a noble work of one of the great classical composers by artists of front rank on technically flawless records put up in a well-made and informatively annotated album for less than "celebrity" prices. I regard such a glorious thing in recorded music as an investment, not an expenditure, because I know that with the care I take of my records it is going to give me years of pleasure, however often I play it.

How many of these super productions I can afford is another question! But I have never grudged one penny spent on complete works; and with many years' experience of records behind me it is my firm conviction that of all classes of recorded music at present on the market the complete works manufactured by His Master's Voice, Columbia, Vocalion, and Parlophone are the *best value for money* obtainable to-day. The really *dear* records are vapid songs and musically valueless instrumental pieces played by celebrities who are apparently of the opinion that the gramophone public is either in its first or second childhood. This kind of thing seems to hail from America; if it suits the American public, well and good—keep it there. But let us have—not sometimes, but all the time—celebrity music by celebrity artists. The other kind of music I have mentioned is much better done by those whose proper place it is to do it. And as nearly all the complete works recorded are celebrity music by celebrity artists, I contend that they are worth their prices at the prevailing rates of discs of their grade. If reduction in price can be brought about it should be general. But reduction in quality must not accompany it.

Yours faithfully,

London, S.W.17.

J. C. W. CHAPMAN.

## THE LIFEBELT.

*(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)*

DEAR SIR,—It must be very gratifying to you to know that so many of your readers are getting such excellent results by means of the above gadget. The principle of affording adequate flexibility to the sound-box, once it is pointed out, is so obvious that the marvel is that the problem has not been previously solved. For years the gramophone was anathema to anyone with a sensitive ear, and this largely because of the perversity which insisted that

the reproducer must be rigid with respect to the record it was expected to play. Only by the construction of most carefully made sound-boxes has it been possible to get anything like good reproduction hitherto.

The problem of giving the right quality of flexibility is not solved by merely providing any kind of flexible or universal joint between any tone-arm or horn and any reproducer. The Lifebelt possesses that quality and can be regulated with exact precision.

From a careful perusal of the letters you have published from those who have made good with the Lifebelt, I am of opinion that all are not getting the results they should. No. 19 complains of "harshness of the brass." He appears to have made a flexible connector of his own (thereby contravening the patented article) which apparently does not give him what a genuine Lifebelt would. No. 20 also claims to have achieved results by somewhat complicated methods of his own in conjunction with the Lifebelt. No. 17 has cut the Gordian knot of his difficulties by the drastic method of mutilating the Lifebelt itself. I hope the latter has now read and profited from Mr. Wilson's excellent article in the December GRAMOPHONE, page 324, and it is to emphasise the importance of that article that I am writing this letter.

If your readers will turn up letters No. 1 (January number, page 366) and No. 3 (p. 367) they will see what has been accomplished by the simple expedient of cutting back the metal tone-arm, which can easily be done with the aid of a file and a pair of pliers. It is quite possible to get results without doing this, but in almost every case it will be found that the tone of the gramophone is improved beyond all expectation by performing this simple operation. Care, of course, must be taken not to overshoot the mark. A large sound-box needs a shorter length of straight than a small diaphragm. But if it is realised that the addition of a Lifebelt between the tone-arm end and the sound-box introduces an additional inch and a half of straight-work no harm can possibly be done by cutting back the metal end to accommodate the extra straight; always providing that one leaves sufficient straight metal tubing (approximately half an inch) on which to fit the Lifebelt. If this is done your readers who already claim to have made good with their Lifebelts and those who are not getting any very marked improvement, will be astonished at the amazing result.

Some machines, like the Decca, do not need to be cut at all. But where it is possible to cut back to the bend or elbow I can confidently recommend it. The first Lifebelt on my table grand yielded marvellous results. In this case there was three quarters of an inch of straight, but taking off one quarter-inch has at least doubled its capacity. At present I have heard no better results in the way of record reproduction than I am now getting with a short, straight swan-neck tone-arm (seven inches long), cut back to half an inch from right-angle bend or elbow with Lifebelt in extenso for full flexibility and a No. 2 H.M.V. sound-box attached. Yet this is only a small machine, very compact and easily carried about from room to room or wherever it may be required.

It is desirable, of course, to make adjustments for correct alignment and also to use some method of relieving the record of unnecessary weight, but these two very important items appear to have little effect upon the quality of the reproduction if the Lifebelt is correctly attached to the tone-arm in the right position.

Yours faithfully,

Kidderminster.

L. D. GRIFFITH.

[The advice as to cutting the tone-arm given by the inventor of the Lifebelt has been taken with success already by some of our readers, but we hesitate to recommend anyone, unless he is of a really mechanical turn of mind himself, to undertake so radical an alteration to the tone-arm.—ED.]

## THE LIFEBELT.

*(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)*

DEAR SIR,—Referring to your editorial published to-day, I find it difficult to understand how Mr. Legge's correspondent can have obtained so very incorrect an idea of my opinions concerning the Lifebelt. These were expressed fully in your January issue. I think ninety-nine out of a hundred reproducing combinations in this country would be improved by the addition of the fitment.

Faithfully yours,

Portsmouth.

HARRY T. BARNETT.



## WATERLOO FOR FIBRES.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your correspondent (page 425, of the February number) may I say that I have had no difficulty in playing the last side of the Tchaikovsky *Fourth Symphony*, with an ordinary undoped fibre needle right through? I have especially tried the record with both new needles and cut needles, and they have played through all right. My machine is a new H.M.V. cabinet model, and I always use a Daws Clarke needle tension attachment for fibres. If your correspondent has any other records that he still has difficulty in playing I would suggest to him the following plan. Invest in a small tin of Glissoline and rub a little over the whole playing surface of the record; play through first with a medium (or soft) steel needle, then wipe off the surface fluff and play through again, this time with a new fibre, and if the point "goes" at any spot insert a new fibre and play through from that spot, etc. The playing through first with a steel needle, especially on the "new recordings" is a very good tip, which was suggested to me by Mr. W. S. Wild, and I have treated most of my own "new recordings" in this way with very great success.

Yours faithfully,

Plymouth.

A. C. ROLSTON.

## THE RACHMANINOFF CONCERTO.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—May I join with Mr. Leslie Hill, who in the February number of THE GRAMOPHONE pleads for a recording of among other pianoforte works the Rachmaninoff *Concerto No. 2, in C minor*. That the issue of this work would not be neglected is proved by the number of times eulogistic notices of it have appeared in THE GRAMOPHONE from your readers. I am aware that two movements of this concerto have already been recorded on Victor records, but to buyers in England I believe the price works out at 11s. 6d. a record. Now that is too much, may our enthusiasm for the work be ever so high. If the English H.M.V. Co. have in their possession pressings of these two movements, please let us have the enjoyment of them to be going on with. With two-thirds snug in our files we would wait patiently for the remaining third.

Yours faithfully,

Liverpool.

A. ERNEST OWEN.

## MOZART.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I have been very interested in the articles on Mozart by Mr. Herman Klein and Mr. Francis Terry. As they profess to cover the entire range of records, I write to point out, however, that the following seem to have escaped their notice: *Ferne von ihrem Neste—Die Gärtnerin aus Liebe*, coupled with *Dein bin ich—Königlicher Schäfer*, both sung by Claire Dux, 12in. Polydor (72893); *Zum Leiden und Rache Arie*, both from *Zauberflöte*, sung by Irene Eden, 12in. Polydor (65605). The omission of the first is particularly striking as the words with translation are actually printed in the February issue. These translations are highly valued. May I plead that the authors of the poems may be given? I have often wished that the authors might be given with the composers on the records themselves. Columbia does so, but not the other companies.

I hope Mr. Klein will give us his view of the records mentioned.

Yours faithfully,

Hamstead.

EDWARD KOCH.

## PARLOPHONE RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—In reference to Mr. P. Wilson's note last month, I am continually getting complaints from correspondents that their records of *all* makes—not only Parlophones—soon show wear, when using fibre needles. I never use any other than *fine* steel needles myself, and with these I am pleased to be able to say that Parlophone records are not the least exception to the general rule that "the more I baste 'em the better they be."

Sincerely yours,

Portsmouth.

HARRY T. BARNETT.

## SAPPHIRE-CUT RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—A great deal is now being said about the recording of the bass, as if it was something quite new, but I have Pathé band and orchestral records published twelve years or more ago, in which there seems to me a perfectly full bass as well as equally good treble, at least if played on a horn Pathéphone with Concert sound-box and metal-mounted sapphire of small size. I do not care for the horn-mounted sapphire, as it seems to me to soften the tone unnaturally. Pathé sound-boxes have always had, I think, the rubber necks now so prominent. Altogether, in the case of the needle-disc, at any rate, perfection seems to be very slowly approached, as if one feature of recording or reproduction is improved, it seems always the case that another is injured. The experts differ about the new things as usual; however, this is the case in everything, I suppose. New kinds of machines and records seem being brought out every few months just now, and one wonders how people can afford them. A correspondent in the September issue said that machines and sound-boxes were much too dear and one would think this must be so. When one considers that a good piano can now be bought for forty pounds and compares the amount of work and material in a piano with that in even the biggest of gramophones, the price of the latter seems preposterous. However, I have no inside knowledge of either business. The price of records has now come down to pre-war level and in some cases actually much cheaper, which seems somewhat strange. Perhaps your expert committee will some time give an analysis of the phonodisc, Pathé, and Edison. It seems strange this system has not been more exploited considering its advantages of natural tone, long wear, and simplicity of operation.

I am, yours truly,

Colwyn Bay.

CHAS. F. HIRD.

## GRAMOPHONE SERVICE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—As your note in the February issue of THE GRAMOPHONE must remind us, it is not so long ago since we were in the painful habit of asking for Beethoven in a cycle store that bristled with spare parts and little oil baths, etc. The shopkeeper, irritated and bewildered by the constant overlapping of music upon rim brakes, would frown at the merest mention of Chopin and scowl if we uttered the word Tchaikovsky.

There are times, when one is purchasing records in —'s that the dreary memory of those cycle shop days returns, but with what pleasure we shake ourselves and recollect that here, at last, we have stumbled upon a service that is delightful!

However, the cycle-gramophone store was a link in the chain, and we must not be too hard upon that link.

I must not omit to mention that THE GRAMOPHONE grows in utility and interest month by month. One never tires of turning to this magazine for solid stuff. I know one man who never reads anything else!

Yours truly,

Holland Park.

ARTHUR F. THORN.

## THAT AVERAGE MAN.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—In the March issue of THE GRAMOPHONE appeared an article by Mr. E. L. Murphy on the average man's choice of records. His remarks were of undoubted interest, but inevitably invited the question as to what, musically speaking, is an average man?

I have half a dozen friends, ardent gramophiles all, who severally approximate to my idea of an average man. I might here say that my own idea of this person is one who does not specialise in any particular kind of music, but is ready to accord his appreciation of anything that strikes him as being decent stuff. He is, for example, capable of admiration for such widely differing records as a violin solo by Kreisler, a contralto solo by Kirkby Lunn, an orchestral rendering of a Schubert symphony, or a record such as the Revellers have made of *Dinah*. Now my acquaintance with these six people appeared to afford an excellent opportunity of getting at the average man's opinion of a given record, and for the purpose of a test I chose one from Mr. Murphy's own list, Parlo. E.10110 *Entry of the Gods*. As an example of orchestral recording, this disc completely satisfies me, and I have always laid claim to the designation of "average man." The



opinions of the six men in question were duly canvassed, but the result—although certainly not lacking in interest—cannot be said to be helpful. I think I cannot do better than give the verdicts in the order in which they came to me.

A. "Top hole." B. "Not bad at all, but the loud passages are noisy without being musical." C. "A beautiful rendering, perfectly balanced." D. "Reminds me of a bull in a china shop." E. "Fine; I felt just like that when I joined up in 1914." F. "Bah!"

All these people heard the record played on the same machine, and I beg to ask again—what is a musically average man?

Yours faithfully,

F. H. L.

Dartford.

## WOMEN AND THE GRAMOPHONE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Before all I must apologise for my broken English, but there are many years since I was in London, and in our remote country I see no Englishmen.

On the page 284 of your esteemed paper I find a challenge on the part of Mrs. Augusta Penfold to any elderly man to prove he shows more devotion to his gramophone than this lady does to hers. Permit me to say a couple of words that might be interesting to your readers.

What wonder if Mrs. Penfold loves her gramophone. She has a good collection of records and enjoys good musik. But your obedient servant—an unhappy Russian engineer—loves his gramophone so to say—by anticipation.

In the spring of 1924, with the possibility to write abroad, I received through the publisher of *English Mechanics*, a dozen of modern records. Then I asked a dozen more, but received a pair, the rest being returned by our custom authorities to the sender without explanation. After that I begged Messrs. J. E. Hough, Ltd., to forward to me some 33 records more. They were returned to London. I tried to have them once more, and again they were returned. Then I asked Messrs. Murdoch & Co. to give me the chance to hear the modern musik, and once more the records were returned. One of my friends tried this autumn to receive Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* and Scriabin's *Poème de l'extase*, 12 records, and he was obliged to pay the custom duties for them as high as £11. Ordinarily one is obliged to pay for such a lot not more than £2 7s., but the authorities have found that the parcels were commercial appearance, and the duties were put five times high. Another gentleman paid duties for five records £5.

Dear madam, after all I have told I did not lost my patience and my devotion to my gramophone. Who is to win?

If Mrs. Penfold would kindly give me her address I would be very glad to write to her some words in a private way.

Yours very truly,

South Russia.

UNHAPPY RUSSIAN ENGINEER.

[This moving letter is printed without alteration or comment.—Ed.]

## THE GRAMOPHONE IN AMERICA.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I am inclined to notice the letter of your correspondent, Mr. H. L. Wilson, in your January issue, referring to music in America. I am afraid that he is too much influenced by the fact that there are more persons in the United States who like commonplace music better than the best music. Of course, music in the United States is exotic, but this is so in England, as Mr. Wilson virtually admits.

The majority of people in any country like the ordinary music best, but if Mr. Wilson will consider that Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Detroit, Chicago, Saint Louis, Minneapolis, San Francisco, and probably some others, have splendid large orchestras, he will see that there are lovers of the best music here in abundance. The concerts are given in large halls which are completely filled at every performance, and hundreds of people wait outside hours to rush to the unreserved seats.

In Boston the regular series by the Boston Symphony Orchestra are given on Friday afternoons and Saturday evenings, each having 24 concerts between October and May. Besides these, this orchestra

gives Wednesday and Tuesday concerts, a series of nine at Harvard University, and others at Wellesley College for girls, concerts in Providence, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Toronto, and Montreal. Similarly the Philadelphia Orchestra gives many concerts outside of Philadelphia, and I have no doubt that the other great orchestras do the same. These orchestras are conducted by the most eminent conductors to be found in Europe, and their personnel is composed of the best players to be found there or elsewhere.

Besides these orchestral concerts there are many given by the very best string quartets, and Mrs. Coolidge, of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, provides a fine string quartet at her own expense, which gives free concerts in various places.

People fill these large halls to hear Paderewski, Rachmaninoff, De Pachmann, Hoffman, and many other celebrated piano players, as well as to hear eminent violinists, 'celloists, vocalists, etc., etc.

In Boston, before the Symphony Orchestra was established 45 years ago, there was the Harvard Orchestra, the Mendelssohn Quintette Club, and others that played the best music. There is in Boston, also, a large orchestra known as the People's Symphony Orchestra which is led by good men, that gives weekly concerts.

Here there is also the Handel and Haydn Society that gives oratorios at intervals from Christmas to Easter, and this is their one hundred and eleventh season. They have a good sized orchestra and their chorus numbers 400. There are various other vocal societies. The Harvard Glee Club sings the best music and a few years ago was most highly complimented in Europe when they made a singing tour at the request of the French Government.

There are in Boston endless piano recitals between October and May. What I say about Boston is true of New York and Philadelphia, and no doubt other places. In New York and Chicago there are splendid permanent opera companies, that give operas in some other places. As I understand, Covent Garden does not support a permanent opera.

Mr. Wilson states that here the great orchestras sometimes play commonplace music to suit the tastes of their hearers. If this is so it is outside of my observation. Mr. Wilson should remember that in this country there are a great many Germans and Italians who enjoy classical music, and who allow no opportunity to escape hear it.

I venture to state that in the places that have permanent orchestras it is practically impossible to obtain seats in the two regular series, except rush seats. That is the reason why extra series are given. In Boston the hall will seat nearly 3,000 persons, and in other places the seating capacities may be greater or less.

In some places there are annual musical festivals where the greatest soloists are engaged. I can mention Bangor, and Portland, Maine, Worcester, Massachusetts, and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. People for miles around go to these festivals, and it is impossible to secure hotel accommodations.

Young people who dance enjoy jazz, but these same people go to hear good music also.

Portland, Maine, and Atlanta, Georgia, employ municipal organists who give frequent organ recitals, and some of the great department stores do the same. Colleges have departments of music and music is taught in the public schools, and has been for many years.

Seventy years ago an eminent musician (European) said that in the United States they made the best pianos in the world, but that they had nobody to play them. I hope the former is still true, but I know the latter is not.

I have written somewhat in detail in order to show Mr. Wilson and others of your readers that in the United States there are abundant opportunities to gratify the most fastidious musical tastes.

Yours truly,

Lexington, Massachusetts.

F. W. DEAN.

\* \* \*

## Royalties

H.M. the Queen of Spain has just got a new H.M.V. through the house of Imhof. Royalties are of course a most important part of the gramophone business—so inventors and composers say. But, in the flesh, what gramophones do Royalties usually buy, what records do they choose? Nothing but Regals and Imperials?



## DANCE NOTES

By Albert Dock

THE instrument I use is one of those new H.M.V.'s with a No. 4 sound-box which Richard Herbert was coveting last month. I find a loud needle best. Of this month's records the Duophone seem to have secured the most dance-to-able fox-trots, though their recording is a little woolly. The Imperial are played too fast for my taste. It's a little trying to face seven versions of *Wildflower* and *Bambalina*; the former stands repetition better than the latter, and although the Casino Orchestra disguises the dullness of *Bambalina* with amusing instrumentation I prefer the Imperial rendering by the Majestic Orchestra or the H.M.V. (Savoy Orpheans). Of the seven one-step records five of them are the jolly, vulgar *Valencia*. I suppose that men still propose at dances, but if so they don't get much help from the waltzes, which, on the whole, are monotonous and without entrain. *Mignonette*, however, is a welcome exception.

## WALTZES.

- H.M.V. B.5016.—*Mignonette*\*\*. This is an excellent record and has the advantage of a really good fox-trot on the back. Jack Hylton plays them both delightfully, so that, if anything, I prefer this to the—
- COL. 3911.—*Mignonette*\*\*, although that is also a very good record and has the marvellous fox-trot *Night* on the back.
- H.M.V. B.2264.—*I'm terribly in love with you*\*\* is another desirable record, pleasantly quiet and with the louder *Memories Melody* on the back. Again played by Jack Hylton.
- ACO. G.15935.—*Without you*\*, played by Harry Bisgood's Orchestra, is charmingly quiet and has the jolly fox-trot *Lovebound* on the reverse.
- PARLO. E.10427 (12in.).—*Thermen* and *Marienlange*\* are waltzes with a somewhat banal lilt, but well played by Marek Weber.
- COL. 3912.—*Speak, though you only say Farewell* may be recommended to those who like waltzing to a choir, but the tune is mediocre and the orchestration ugly, though the New Princes Toronto Band does what it can with it.
- COL. 3918.—*Always I'll be loving you* (Bert Ralton and Havana Band) and see "Fox-trots." As monotonous as its title implies!
- DUO. B.5119.—*You forgot to remember* (John Birmingham and his Band) and see "Fox-trots."
- COL. 3905.—*Deep in my heart, dear* (Bert Ralton and Havana Band) and see "Fox-trots." Sentimental without allurements.
- IMP. 1554.—*Pal of my cradle days and Prisoner's song* (V.) (Eadie Peabody's Orchestra). Dull.
- VOC. X.9757.—*Deep in my heart, dear* (Ben Selvin's Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."
- VOC. X.9756.—*Lullaby Lane* and *So long! I'll see you again* (Miami Miamba Band). Quiet and rather halting.
- H.M.V. B.2254.—*Creep into my arms*\* (Jack Hylton) and see "Fox-trots." A good waltz well played.
- H.M.V. B.5018.—*What do we care if we are up till one o'clock and Let us waltz as we say Good-bye* (V.) (International Novelty Orchestra).

## ONE-STEPS.

- COL. 3918.—*Valencia*\* (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band) and see "Waltzes." Cheerfully vulgar tune very well played.
- ACTUELLE. 11021.—*Valencia*\* (Miami Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Good playing.
- H.M.V. B.2272.—*Valencia*\* (Savoy Havana) and see "Waltzes." Not as desirable as the Columbia record as its reverse side is less interesting.
- VOC. X.9763.—*Valencia*\* (Villa Splendide Band) and *Forgiveness* (Waltz).
- COL. 3905.—*Serenade* (Bert Ralton and Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."

DUO. B.5123.—*Don't bring Lulu* (V.) (Burlington Dance Orchestra) and see "Tangos."

ZONO. 2707.—*Valencia* (the Carlton Hotel Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Loud.

## TANGOS.

The *Tangos* tend to be rather alike and to lack the seduction of true Spanish dance music. I have starred the only two possible exceptions.

H.M.V. B.5001.—*Piccolo Navio* and *Coqueta*\* (Rio Grande Tango Band).

H.M.V. B.5013.—*Tango Town Tango*\* and *Alba de Amor* (Rio Grande Tango Band). The variations are not very interesting.

DUO. B.5123.—*Por ti* (Savile Tango Band) and see "One-steps." Played far too fast for my taste. A tango should not, I feel, approximate to a fox-trot rhythm.

ZONO. 2698.—*Tango Sentimental* and *Sentimiento Gaucho* (André Ledor's Tango Band). Pleasantly alluring.

## FOX-TROTS.

- H.M.V. B.5016.—*My girl's got long hair*\*\* (Jack Hylton). Excellent. See "Waltzes."
- COL. 3911.—*Night*\*\* (Percival Mackey's Band) and see "Waltzes." Excellent in every way.
- DUO. B.5119.—*Oh boy, what a girl*\* (John Birmingham) and see "Waltzes." Well played.
- H.M.V. B.2254.—*Hey hey and Hee hee*\* (Jack Hylton) and see "Waltzes." Good rhythm and well played.
- DUO. B.5125.—*Angry* and *Charlestonette*\* (Lea's Dance Orchestra). Good rhythm but ugly instrumentation.
- DUO. B.5120.—*Bam bam Bamy shore*\* and *Lady of the Nile* (John Birmingham and his Band). Well played as usual.
- PARLO. E.10434 (12in.).—*Big white moon and Baby please tell me* (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra).
- DUO. B.5121.—*Miami* and *Sunny Havana*\* (Burlington Dance Orchestra).
- DUO. B.5122.—*I want a lovable baby*\* and *Nobody but Fanny* (V.) (Monterey Dance Band). Quiet.
- DUO. B.5124.—*Paddlin' Madelin' home* and *In a little lone boat* (V.) (Leas Dance Orchestra).
- BRUN. 2989.—*Lonesome* and *Spanish Shawl*. (Roy Miller and Orchestra).
- BRUN. 2984.—*Manhattan* and *Sentimental Me*\* (Phil Ohman and Victor Arden with the Regent Club Orchestra). Good rhythm; dull colour.
- BRUN. 2979.—*Headin' for home*\* and *I never knew* (V.). Regent Club Orchestra.
- BRUN. 2422.—*Wildflower* and *Bambalina* (Carl Fenton's Orchestra).
- ACTUELLE. 11005.—*Wildflower* and *Bambalina*\* (Casino Dance Orchestra). *Bambalina* is essentially a dull tune, here disguised by amusing orchestration.
- IMP. 1556.—*Wildflower* and *Bambalina*\* (Majestic Dance Orchestra).
- ACTUELLE. 11011.—*Tin Can Fusiliers* and *Araby* (V.) (Star Syncopaters). Fast tempo, rather of the military order the former, and *Araby* suffers from "blast."
- ACTUELLE. 11014.—*Ukulele lullaby*\* (V.) (Cabaret Dance Band).
- H.M.V. B.2247.—*Betty in Mayfair* and *By the light of the stars*\* (Savoy Orpheans).
- COL. 3909.—*Heading for Louisville* and *What did I tell ya*\* (Bert Ralton and Havana Band).
- COL. 3913.—*Sleepy time Gal* and *Sentimental me* (Denza Dance Band). Not wonderful tunes, but well played and very danceable.
- VOC. X.9757.—*Sleepy time Gal* (Ben Selvin and Orchestra) and see "Waltzes." This record of *Sleepy time Gal* suffers by having a poor waltz to balance it.
- ACO. G.15935.—*Love-bound*\* (the Roving Minstrels) and see "Waltzes." Jolly.



- H.M.V. B.5003.—*Clap hands, here comes Charlie and Wait till to-morrow night\** (Savoy Orpheans).
- VOC. X.9758.—*That certain party and I never knew* (Ambassadors). Quiet but attractive.
- PARLO. 5552.—*Are you sorry?* and *Loud-speaking papa* (the Goofus Five). Staccato and jumpy and therefore suitable to some types of dancer.
- PARLO. 5548.—*Angry* and *You gotta know how* (Arcadian Serenaders). Very staccato.
- COL. 3917.—*Then I'll be happy* and *Say who's that baby doll* (Denza Dance Band). Good for Charlestoniers!
- IMP. 1555.—*I'm knee-deep in daisies* (Hollywood Dance Orchestra), and *Clap hands, here comes Charlie* (V.) (New Orleans).
- IMP. 1553.—*Help to make a little sunshine* (V.) and *The two of us* (V.) (Greening's Dance Orchestra). Very fast tempo.
- IMP. 1552.—*Moonlight and roses* and *The more I see of Mary Seymour* (V.) (Greening's Dance Orchestra). Also very fast.
- COL. 3912.—*Smile all the while* (New Princes Toronto Band) and see "Waltzes."
- H.M.V. B.2267.—*Sad* (Savoy Orpheans) and a Waltz. Good time.
- ACTUELLE. 11021.—*C'était moi* (Miami Dance Orchestra) and see "One-steps."
- BRUNS. 2981.—*Stump off, let's go* and *Carolina Stomp* (Cotton Pickers' Orchestra). Rather ugly.
- H.M.V. B.5002.—*The two of us\** and *Bah, Bah, Bartholomew* (V.) (Savoy Havana). Beautifully harmonised.
- COL. 3910.—*What's the good of leaving the dear old home\** (V.) and *The two of us\** (V.) (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band). The former is rather dogmatic, but with good variations, and the latter is quiet and charming, excellent rhythm.
- COL. 3908.—*In the swim at Miami* and *Why don't you say so* (Percival Mackey's Band). Good swing.
- H.M.V. B.2275.—*What a blue-eyed baby you are\*\** (V.). Excellent time. *Spanish Shawl* (Edwin J. McEnelly's Orchestra). Less interesting.
- H.M.V. B.5012.—*Night\** and *The Tin Can Fusiliers\**. The second with its reminiscences from *Carmen* is the best record of this tune I know. Jack Hylton is usually interesting and plays here two good fox-trots.
- H.M.V. B.5005.—*Let me introduce you to Rosie* and *Five foot two* (Savoy Orpheans). Good rhythm.
- H.M.V. B.5000.—*You must have a little bit of fun* (V.) and *Sleepy time girl \*\**(V.) (Jack Hylton). Again excellent.
- H.M.V. B.5007.—*Dreamland* and *Fooing* (Savoy Orpheans). This is played fast but very smoothly.
- H.M.V. B.2265.—*Nobody's business\** (V.) and *Ukulele lullaby* (Jack Hylton). The second of these, though not a good tune, is restful.
- ACO. G.15934.—*Fireside* (V.) and *Show me the way to go home* (V.) (Cleveland Society's Band). Cheerful chorus.
- VOC. X.9754.—*The two of us* and *Then I'll be happy* (Don Parker and his Band).
- ACO. G.15933.—*Bamboola* and *Five foot two* (Los Angeles Dance Orchestra).
- COL. 3906.—*I love you, I love you, I love you and I can always find another partner* (Percival Mackey's Band).
- VOC. X.9755.—*I love my baby* and *Peaceful valley* (Don Parker and his band). I do not find this very good.
- H.M.V. B.2268.—*Croon a Little Lullaby* (International Novelty Orchestra) and *Just a little thing called Rhythm\*\** (George Olson and his Music). Both vocal and good rhythm.
- VOC. X.9759.—*Lonesome\** and *Marguerite* (Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra). Played smoothly and well.
- VOC. X.9527.—*Wildflower* and *Bambalina* (Ben Bernie's Orchestra). Well played.
- H.M.V. B.5010.—*Wildflower\** and *Bambalina\** (V.) (Savoy Orpheans). Original variations subtly played. Of the six or seven versions of this pair of tunes this is the one I prefer.
- ACO. G.15930.—*Wildflower* and *Bambalina* (V.) (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra). This record is too out of tune to be good, but then it is cheap.
- H.M.V. B.5011.—*Pigtail Alley* and *What did I tell you* (V.) (Savoy Orpheans) who do what they can with mediocre tunes.
- COL. 3907.—*Polly put the kettle on* and *Along the old Lake Trail* (V.) (Percival Mackey's Band). Quiet and pleasant.
- ACO. G.15931.—*My castle in Spain* and *Along the old Lake Trail* (V.) (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra). Mr. Jeffries is again a little out of tune, but it is a good cheap record.
- ACO. G.15932.—*Peaceful valley\** (Ohio Novelty Band) and *I'm sitting on top of the world* (the Old Virginians). The best of the cheap records.
- H.M.V. B.5005.—*Five foot two—one side only*—(Savoy Orpheans). Fast.
- H.M.V. B.5004.—*Ask her and Pas des écharpes* (Kit-Cat Band). Syncopated Chaminade!
- H.M.V. B.5006.—*Then I'll be happy\** (V.) and *Smile a little bit\** (Savoy Orpheans).
- H.M.V. B.5015.—*In your green hat* and *Wildflower\** (V.) (Savoy Orpheans). Quick tempo; well played and sung.
- H.M.V. B.5017.—*Heading for Louisville\** and *No man's mamma* (Savoy Orpheans).
- H.M.V. B.2276.—*There are no flies on Auntie* (V.) (Happiness Boys) and *Bam, Bam, Bamy shore\** (V.) (the Revellers). The choruses are good to dance to, but there is conversation also.
- H.M.V. B.2266.—*My castle in Spain\** and *Hitch up the horses\** (Savoy Orpheans). Intriguing harmonisation.
- COL. 5546.—*Five foot two* (V.) and *To-morrow morning* (V.) (Melody Sheiks). Good.
- COL. 5551.—*Hay foot, straw foot* and *Everybody Stomp* (Jimmy Joy's Orchestra). Good Charleston, but otherwise uninteresting; quiet.
- COL. 5549.—*Just a little bit bad* (V.) and *Co-ed\** (Arcadian Serenaders). Good Charleston.
- COL. 5547.—*I'm sitting on top of the world* (V.) and *Kentucky's way of saying good morning* (V.) (the Jazz Pilots).
- BELTONA. 944.—*Wildflower* and *Bambalina* (Avenue Dance Orchestra).
- BELTONA. 943.—*My castle in Spain* and *The two of us* (V.) (Avenue Dance Orchestra).
- ZONOPHONE. 2707.—*Mysterious eyes* (Tango fox-trot) (Carlton Hotel Dance Orchestra) and see "One-steps." Loud and cheerful.
- H.M.V. B.5007.—*"Fooing"\** (V.) and *"I'm on my way to dreamland"\** (Savoy Orpheans). A good record, which arrived late.

**N.B.**—In the above lists the titles of all the best records are printed in heavy type (Clarendon). The use of asterisks is a further effort to denote comparative merit.

When only one band is mentioned in describing a record it means that both tunes are played by the same band. (V.) after the name of a tune indicates the presence of a vocal refrain, chorus, or accompaniment. All records are 10in. unless otherwise described. The abbreviations of makers' names are obvious.

The prices of the records in the lists are as follows:—Aco.: 10in., 2s. 6d. Actuelle: 10in., 2s. 6d. Beltona: 10 in., 2s. 6d. Brunswick: 10in., 3s. Columbia: 10in., 3s. Duophone: 10 in., 2s. 6d. H.M.V.: 10in., 3s. Imperial: 10in., 2s. Parlophone: 12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 2s. 6d. Vocalion: 10in., 3s. Zonophone: 10in., 2s. 6d.



# Analytical Notes and First Reviews

## CHAMBER MUSIC

### COLUMBIA.

L.1724-1727 (four 12in. records, with album, 26s.).—**The London String Quartet: Quartet in E minor, Op 59, No. 2** (Beethoven). Eulenburg and Philharmonia min. score.

This work was recorded complete for H.M.V. by the Virtuoso Quartet a year or more ago. I heard these records when they first came out, but my recollection of many of their details has now grown rather hazy, and in any case it would be unfair to institute a comparison between the Columbia discs that I have just listened to on my new H.M.V. table grand (with a No. 4 sound-box) and anything reproduced by a less up-to-date type of machine. I am, however, inclined to think that this new version is the better of the two if only on account of the delicacy and imaginativeness of the playing. The Virtuoso Quartet gave a performance that was anything but incompetent, but they have not reached the standard of the L.S.Q. at its best.

Nowadays new methods of reproduction follow so quickly on one another's heels that one has to walk warily; so I will content myself by saying that the recording here reminds me more of the old style of work than of the the new process, to which we owe the *Three Idylls* that Columbia issued a month or two ago. But whatever may be the secrets of the recording room, the work has been exceptionally well done. Not only are the instrumental timbres reflected with exceptional fidelity, but balance, definition, and clarity are all very satisfactory. If there is a slight tendency to shrillness on certain high violin notes (a defect that is most noticeable in the long slow movement) it is more than compensated by the excellent tone of the 'cello, even in its lowest register. I could have wished that some of the *pianissimo* passages had not sounded quite so faint (in spite of a loud needle), but, after all, we cannot expect to have everything.

The Quartet itself is the second of the magnificent set of three that Beethoven dedicated to the Russian Count Rasoumovsky, and a delicate tribute to the Count may be found in the *Thème Russe*, on which the *trio* of the *scherzo* is based. To us this Russian folk tune has an additional interest in that it has also been used by Moussorgsky for the first chorus of the coronation scene in *Boris*. But I need say no more about a work that has already received its share of attention in *THE GRAMOPHONE*.

Breaks.—First movement, page 9, line 3, bar 1. Second movement, page 19, line 3, bar 4, and page 22, line 4, bar 1. Fourth movement, page 37, line 3, bar 1. (Eulenburg). First movement, page 7, line 3, bar 1. Second movement, page 17, line 3, bar 4 and page 20, line 4, bar 1. Fourth movement, page 36, line 4, bar 1 (Philharmonia).

### VOCALION.

K.05222-05223 (two 12in. records, 9s.).—**Adila Fachiri, Jelly d'Aranyi, and Ethel Hobday: Sonata for two violins and piano** (Handel).

Although I have not been able to secure a score of this work at short notice I have no reason to believe that it is not complete. As to its history, again I have not had time to make sure, but I have an idea, which a hearing of the music has confirmed, that it is an early composition. Written in a form that was common in Handel's time (*Andante—Allegro—Poco Adagio—Allegro*), it contains many features that declare its authorship, but it seems to me to lack the outstanding qualities of Handel's best work. The second record strikes me as the better of the two from every

point of view, but neither is really remarkable. The music lacks interest at times and does not appear to have inspired the fine artists by whom it is rendered to one of their highest flights. The Vocalion company is impeccable as ever in the matter of surface, but there is an occasional unevenness in the reproduction. I should add that my test pressing of the first record was a "swinger," so readers will probably find their version of the first two movements better than mine.

### HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.1075-1077 (three 12in. records, 19s. 6d.).—**The Budapest String Quartet: Quartet in G major, Op. 76, No. 1** (Haydn), and (last side) **Allegro** (Dittersdorf). Eulenburg min. score (for the Haydn).

This quartet arrived rather late for review and I have not had time to look up the files, but I think the H.M.V. record of the first movement has been withdrawn. It is in the usual four movement form. The main subject of the first movement is given out by the 'cello after three introductory chords, and is the sort of dance measure in which Haydn rejoiced. A change of key comes in due course, but no real second subject arrives till later (score, page 5, bar 8), and when it comes it is not very important. A full close brings this section of the movement to an end, and there follows a development that includes some clever contrapuntal treatment of the first subject and a good deal of less interesting passage work. At the end the opening part of the movement is repeated in the usual way.

The slow movement is constructed out of two contrasted ideas, the expressive melody with which it starts and the little phrase that is first heard on the 'cello when the pace of the music increases a little. These follow each other alternately, being subjected to considerable modification as the movement goes on. The break occurs at the second re-appearance of the opening phrase (page 11, line 5, bar 4).

The third movement, marked *presto*, is faster than the usual minuet, and distinctly original. It will be noticed that the players slacken their pace a good deal for the simple but delightful *trio*. I find the *finale* less interesting. It is built on the same lines as the first movement, the first subject

being stated at the outset in the minor key, and the second (which is very like it) appearing in the relative-major on page 16, line 5, end of bar 2. Full close and development follow in their usual course, but just as the first subject is beginning to find its way back Haydn breaks into the major key and ends with a telescoped version of the first part of the movement and a *coda*.

The players should be fine exponents of Haydn if their name means anything and I am inclined to take their word for it when they make one or two rather unexpected changes of *tempo*. I do not believe that the first violin would have used quite so much tone in the vigorous passage-work of the *finale* and in a few other places, had he realised the pit-falls of the new recording; but the performance remains a fine piece of artistry for all that. The reproduction is very good as far as clarity, balance and definition are concerned, but there are indications, especially in the first violin part, that there is a lot of work still to be done before the *timbre* of the instruments of the string quartet is reproduced with the fidelity that we all desire.

The odd side is very appropriately filled by a movement from the pen of Haydn's contemporary, Dittersdorf. It shows us that Dittersdorf had a real mastery of his medium, but also, unfortunately, that technical proficiency and the use of an idiom similar to that of Haydn and Mozart do not make fine music when genius is lacking.

P. L.

### SONNET.

TO BERLIOZ.

(Inspired by a hearing of the *Symphonie Fantastique*.)

[Col. L.1708-1713.]

How like some magic, richly-jewelled stone,  
Set in the velvet diadem of night,  
Your music radiates with gorgeous light:  
Now faintly evanescent as the tone  
Of violet and musk-rose not full blown  
Is wafted into sweet, elusive themes;  
Now brightly vivid as in ruby dreams  
That mirror necromancy's torrid zone.

No single facet of the thirsting soul  
Seeking the vast, untrodden paths of thought  
Escaped your genius. The hidden goal  
Of man's immortal destiny is wrought  
Into one wondrous tapestry of sound  
In which your certain majesty is crowned!

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## ORCHESTRAL

## COLUMBIA.

- L.1717, 1718, 1719, 1720, 1721, 1722 (12in., 39s.).—**London Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by Sir Dan Godfrey: **A London Symphony** (Vaughan Williams). Stainer and Bell.  
 3896 (10in., 3s.).—**Jean Lensen and His Orchestra**: **Maria-Mari** (di Capua) and **Minuet in G** (Paderewski).  
 3898 (10in., 3s.).—**Russian Balalaika Orchestra**: **Moment Musical** (Schubert) and **Mazurka** (Wieniawski).

## PARLOPHONE.

- E.10423, 10424, 10425 (12in., 13s. 6d.).—**Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin**, conducted by E. Mœrike: **Symphonic Poem, Macbeth** (Strauss). Eulenburg and Philharmonia. On reverse of E.10425, **Emmy Bettendorf**: **Morgen** (Strauss).  
 E.10426 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin**, conducted by Dr. Weissmann: **Preciosa Overture** (Weber). Eulenburg.  
 E.10427 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Edith Lorand Orchestra**: **Indian Suite, Taj Mahal** (Elegy, Oriental Dance, Romance, Festival March) (Bruno Lüling).

## POLYDOR.

- 66067, 66068, 66069 (12in., 13s. 6d.).—**State Opera House Orchestra, Berlin**, conducted by Dirk Fock: **Scheherazade, Parts 1 and 2** (Rimsky-Korsakov). Belaieff score.

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

- C.1253 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Jack Hylton and His Orchestra**: **The Selfish Giant** (Eric Coates).  
 C.1254-1255 (12in., 9s.).—**New Light Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by Percy Fletcher: **Suite, Ballet Egyptien** (Luigini).

## VOCALION.

- A.0258 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—**Aeolian Orchestra**, conducted by Rhené-Baton: **España Rapsodie** (Chabrier).

## ACCO.

- G.15920 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Grosvenor Orchestra**. **Fingal's Cave Overture** (Mendelssohn).

Gramophones used: H.M.V. new model, No. 126, sound-box No. 4, with constant reference to a large Columbia table grand, sound-box No. 7, and some use of a Clifphone large table model.

*Columbia*.—Breaks in the symphony: Side 1, page 10, bar 3; side 2, page 31, bar 4; side 3, page 50, bar 6; side 4, end of First Movement; side 5, page 78, bar 2; side 6, page 89, bar 1; side 7, end of Slow Movement; side 8, page 128, bar 1; side 9, end of Scherzo; side 10, page 168, bar 1; side 11, end of page 184; side 12, end of work. Recording complete, with the exception that there is a short cut in the Epilogue, and that a repetition in the Scherzo is omitted.

"The composer tells us there is no 'programme' to the symphony." So says a note in the album containing the records. Is that quite fair—to write a work avowedly embodying one man's thoughts about London, and then not to tell us directly what they were, and how inspired? If we are asked to listen to a symphony without a title, and hear the chime of bells, we can say "London" or "Cambridge" or merely "bells," according to our knowledge of or interest in campanology, and its use in a symphony. It does not seem to me unfair to introduce any kind of natural or artificial sound, that *might* be recognised; but I feel that the half-loaf of a "London" symphony without a programme is a little disappointing. However, that is just a personal view, and I enjoy, to some extent at least, this curious and powerful, if unequal, work, which is dedicated to the memory of a young composer killed in the war, George Butterworth.

Two movements of it (much cut) were done by Columbia two or three years ago. Now have the whole work.

*Sides 1 and 2*.—The under-current is effective, but the bells are not quite clear. I find the themes rather wandering, after this composer's style, and the harmony more than a little self-

conscious. Compare, for instance, the middle of side 2 with that at the start of side 3. The "popular" tune on the former seems out of the picture as regards its harmony. This is not the composer's natural speech; but in side 3 he talks in his favourite style, though I cannot hear that he gets on very much with whatever argument he may be pursuing. The quartet of strings here is used with excellent effect. This is the sort of musing in which the composer delights; but I do not think it can honestly be said to possess much value as material for building up a symphonic movement. On side 4 the bits of popular tune come in again, and there is some working up, if not much working out. Those repetitions an inch from the inside of the disc are surely weak. Would Elgar so overdo a device? Frankly, I do not think Vaughan Williams has the staying power for a would-be powerful movement of this kind. His repetitions remind one of those of the Russians; and though he has more subtlety than they, and more polish, I do not find him very stimulating, as a rule. In the "Pastoral" symphony he works far more happily, because naturally.

The *Second Movement* seems much more accomplished. I think the orchestra makes the not very simple scoring clear enough. The recording of this is on a good level, though I miss a little the true richness of the sonorities. (The newest method of recording is apparently not employed in this work.)

*Third Movement (Scherzo-Nocturne)*. The album notes suggest Hampstead Heath on a bank holiday as a possible "programme" for this. I figure it as the decorous mirth of some more modally-minded parties. A touch of Chestertonism, if you will, with a strong dash of Chelsea and a flavouring of a folk song society's beanfeast, or some such innocent merry-making. The concertina on side 9 (the album says "mouth organ"—you take your choice) does give Heathy colour, certainly. Surely the next couple of inches indicate that the composer is not really happy in developing a bustling theme. Compare, for example, the quick movements of his recent *Concerto Accademico*.

*Last Movement*.—This has an elegiac note; with the slow movement it seems to me to contain the most impressive pages in the symphony, though here again there seems to me a definite weakness about such portions as the close of side 10, for example. However, I realise increasingly that to a very considerable extent affection for Vaughan Williams's music "in the lump" is a matter of temperament. If one's mind happens to chime with his, and one has a taste for modality, and for his special kind of emotional expression, there is doubtless much in this music to admire. I admire some things in it—the ease with which he strikes out his broader effects, his orchestral capacity, his exceeding sincerity, and the persuasive, pervading beauty of his introspective moments.

Conductor and orchestra seem to have exercised a restraint quite in keeping with the work—perhaps slightly to excess. The reproduction, on the older lines, is adequate in almost all ways save that as indicated above, I think we might have had a rather greater "spread of canvas" from the strings.

The Jean Lensen Orchestra is recorded by the new system. It is a small body with piano, that goes in for plenty of sharp contrasts. The sort of café music it plays is rather pains-folly played. Observe the somewhat elderly evolutions in the di Capua piece. Here is incipient arthritis, if I mistake not.

The balalaika is a sort of modern American business man's music-maker. It would beat Kipling's banjo as an instrument of trade expansion. I picture a band of Babbitts intoning their boosts to its strains. The gentle Schubert has a moment that is very nearly unmusical at the hands of these Russian apostles of "pep"-made-respectable. The *Mazurka* is more in character. I rather like its mild excess.

*Parlophone*.—Breaks in *Macbeth*: Side 1, page 22, bar 2 (min. score); side 2, page 44, bar 1; side 3, end of page 60; side 4, page 85, bar 3 (cut from here to page 87, bar 4). (Eulenburg).

*Macbeth* was Strauss's first tone-poem (though *Don Juan* bears an earlier opus number). It is amazingly mature work for a youngster of twenty-two. The composer well said that with *Macbeth* he had "entered on an entirely new road." The "Symphonic Fantasia," *Aus Italien*, showed the way. *Macbeth* shows the way to *Don Juan*, and we have hints of the method of *Till*; but the later works had fairly elaborate "programmes." *Macbeth* bears very little to indicate the composer's train of thought; we have to seek that in the music itself, and it is not difficult to feel that the tone-poem is a broad and often subtle study of the mind of a brave man who was once in the way of being a great man. The music "lives throughout," as Newman says, "in one medium. It is all psychology and no action."

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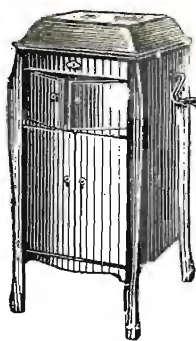
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his printing "Macbeth" over the sixth bar, where a characteristically bold Straussian subject starts (after five bars of prelude that remind one of the opening of the *Ninth Symphony*). Note that as the strings begin the "Macbeth" theme, the horns and bass trumpet have as counterpoint a seven-note fragment that is a good deal used as the work develops. A third theme is that which comes in the basses (wood-wind and strings) at bar 20. It is marked *Molto espressivo*. This is developed, the earlier themes breaking in. In a little comes the second clue (page 15, half an inch from inside of side 1). A few phrases of Lady Macbeth's are printed at a place where the music is marked *Appassionato*. They are from Act I, scene IV., and run:—

"Hie thee hither,  
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,  
And chastise with the valour of my tongue  
All that impedes thee from the golden round,  
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem  
To have thee crown'd withal."

The theme of Lady Macbeth is not long prominent. It disappears when a gentle, soothing tune appears (page 26, a little over half an inch from the start of side 2). This (on violins, violas supporting with *pizzicato arpeggios*) is possibly expressive of the affectionate side of Macbeth's nature. It is not necessary to try to piece out the music into sections "representative" of this, that or the other. One other idea is clear—that of Macduff's triumphal march, which, in Strauss's first thought, ended the work. How much finer was the second thought, that caused him to add the short epilogue—as finely and sparsely dramatically expressive as anything I know. It may be compared to the very different epilogue in *Till*; but it has a deeper significance than that.

The performance has good grip, and a certain freedom and "slimness" that I like. There are some awkward corners—page 48 of the score, for instance, where the strings soar very high. The string octave work on page 51 is rather risky. It comes off without a side-slip, though we are in danger for an instant, once or twice. Side 4 seems to me, at the start, somewhat thin-toned. It gets richer later. Page 23 (the repetition of the Lady Macbeth idea) sounds a bit "woolly" on my H.M.V., but clearer on the Columbia. I wished for a bigger body of strings, and especially for more basses, to increase the nobility of the limning of Macbeth. I hope we may hear this tone-poem again in the concert room. It has not been played here since the war, I believe.

The song *Morgen*, that fills the last side, is dealt with by my colleague into whose department this comes.

*Preciosa* is a capital sample of the theatrically-minded Weber. His overture and incidental music to P. A. Wolff's play were completed when he was thirty-four. The drama was produced in England in 1825, the year before he died (while over here superintending the *Oberon* performances at Covent Garden). The plot is taken from Cervantes, and we may take it that the music gives Weber's idea of the Spanish atmosphere. He told us in the manuscript of the overture that the march he uses here (and twice in the opera) is from a real tune of the gipsies.

The wood-wind work is neat, but in this performance its tone is veiled. The balance is well kept. If there were more brightness in the tone the performance would be admirable, except perhaps in point of actual volume, which is somewhat slight.

Our Parlophone friends have a pleasant habit of not writing the composer's name on the sample records that come for review, so that one often has to find out this by deduction. It cannot always be done; and one of these days I or a colleague will surely condemn something we ought not to condemn! As one of the critics asks in *Fanny's First Play*, how can we be expected to say whether a piece is good or not if we don't know who is the author? It isn't fair! The latest Lorand record is as well played as ever; this is an extremely competent combination; but the music is frankly fudged (to use a schoolboy term)—fudged from the people who have done this sort of thing forty years ago. Whoever wrote *Taj Mahal* took its name in vain. This is no stately monument; rather a stucco cinema, got up to look like an eastern palace. The music would go well enough inside, to a brain-easing film, but it has scarcely any value otherwise.

*Polydor*.—We have had a lot of *Scheherazades*. Here are two movements again—the first and second. These have been annotated already (in the issue of February, 1925, Vol. II., p. 339). As a matter of fact, there is little to say about the "programme"

of any of the movements; it is so loose. The chief attraction is in the scoring.

When you have given the titles—First Movement, *The Sea and Sinbad's Ship*; Second, *The Story of the Kalandar Prince*—you have said sufficient to set the imagination to work. The two leading themes—that which opens the work (the sultan, or the sea—take your choice), and the violin cadenza (*Scheherazade*, teller of tales to avert the sultan's wrath)—are easy to recognise. The sea is suggested also, in the first movement, by the billowing accompaniment that starts on page 5, immediately after the *Scheherazade* theme has been given out.

The bassoon in the second movement is about the best bit of wood-wind work in this recording. The whole is a little tame, after the Columbia records we have. There is not very much climax anywhere, and not a great deal of subtlety in detail. The performance and recording seem to me averagely good, and no more.

Personally, I find the music palls a good deal on repeated hearings. Rimsky was never strong in development, and one does so tire of the Russian habit of saying things over and over again, even when they are said with a superficial difference. One wants to hear things building up more. Even programme music need not wander, as Strauss and Elgar have shown us. The Polydor performance is well-knit, though I find the wood-wind not quite rich enough in such places as page 13 of the score. There is a slight lack of individuality about these instruments.

Breaks: Side 1, page 15, bar 1; side 2, page 31, bar 5; side 3, end of First Movement; side 4, page 57, bar 2; side 5, end of page 85; side 6, end of Second Movement.

*His Master's Voice*.—I have no story for *The Selfish Giant*. Who is he? Possibly Giant Jazz, who doth bestride the narrow-brow's world these days? I do not know the constitution of Mr. Hylton's orchestra, but it is a noisy one, singularly ill-balanced, as any unbiased person will agree, I think. This is not jazz, in the usual meaning of the term, though it has the trace of the serpent in it.

This seems to me a quite ineffective attempt (I take it) to blend jazz and light music. It won't work. That, indeed, is one of the beauties of the business; jazz simply won't blend with anything. Hence the failure of these preposterous attempts to write "jazz symphonies," and the ridiculousness, patent to any experienced musician, of speaking grandly of "symphonised syncopation," to babbling of jazz as the means of revivifying symphonic music. Of all the impudence! Jazz holds no possibilities of development. How can a thing so desperately unrhythmic have any? (Its so-called rhythm is only the tiresome repetition of time patterns.) But it won't go until something takes its place. I don't believe it's dying. I don't know that I particularly want it to die. We might have, after it, seven devils worse than the first.

Mr. Eric Coates has done much more interesting work than this. Let him keep to his pleasant light music for a normal orchestra with some balance and blend about it—and let jazz keep to its own domain, which never was that of music.

The Luigini suite is a rather vulgar affair (using the term in its less depreciatory meaning as something that, like the art of certain "comediennes," gets across the footlights well, though it is not at all subtle). The orchestra is fresh, bright and crisp. This is excellent production. The "new method" string tone seems rather less aggressive here; but that may be because the orchestration is of that nature, as a whole, and so the string tones may stand out less than they would in a more finely-wrought piece.

Chabrier's is another gaudy piece, that is mercifully less noisy here than "at first ear." The composer picked up his tunes while on a visit to Spain, so the local colour may be considered authentic. His jotás and fandangos are attractive enough, as recreation. Indeed, for those who like something of the "tuppence coloured" variety, this is quite an admirable record. The orchestra brings it all off with a good deal of point. I have heard more "devil" put into it, on the concert platform, when, for instance, Sir Henry Wood has gone home and left the last Prom. item to Mr. Woodhouse.

*Aco*.—The *Hebrides Overture* is not well balanced, in this performance. The bass is quite inadequate, and I do not like the way in which the music is treated. This combination ought to look to its constitution. It really cannot make a good shot at such music as it is. There are considerable cuts in the piece. K.K.



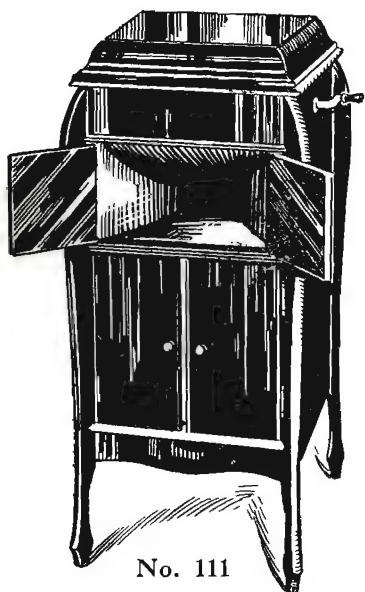
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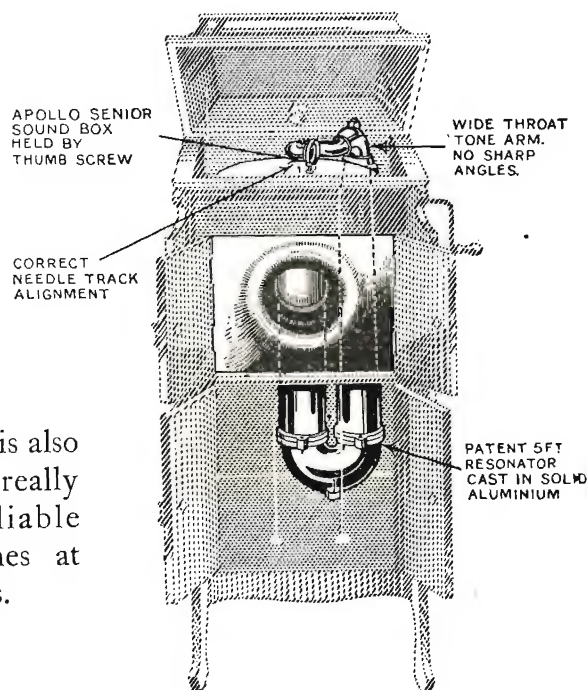
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## INSTRUMENTAL

## VIOLIN.

## ACO.

G.15919 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Peggy Cochrane: *The Temple Bells* and *Kashmiri Song* (Woodforde-Finden) and *Where the Abana flows and How many a lonely caravan* (Woodforde-Finden).

## COLUMBIA.

9081 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Mayer Gordon: *Slav Dance No. 2* (Dvorák) and *Scherzo-Tarantelle* (Wieniawski).

## DUOPHONE.

G.S.7004 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—Daisy Kennedy: *Hungarian Dance in D minor* (Brahms-Joachim) and *Old Viennese Folk Songs* (Brandl-Kreisler).

G.S.7006 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—Daisy Kennedy: *Valse* (Cramer, arr. Burmester) and *Praeludium* (Bach-Kreisler).

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

C.1247-1248 (two 12in. records, 9s.).—Marjorie Hayward and Una Bourne: *Sonata in B flat* (Mozart).

D.B.910 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Renée Chemet: *Nocturne in C sharp minor, Op. 19, No. 4* (Tchaikovsky) and *Minuet* (Haydn).

From the musical point of view, the Mozart *Sonata* recorded for H.M.V. by Marjorie Hayward and Una Bourne is probably the most interesting thing in this month's rather short list. It is one of a considerable number of compositions for violin and piano written by Mozart which, though they do not rank among his greatest works, are still far from negligible. The present example is among the best of them, and it is performed complete. The first section of the opening movement is repeated (the break between the two sides coming when we reach bar 46 for the second time), as are the first two paragraphs of the *Finale*; but the slow movement is long enough to fill up a whole side when played straight through.

Balance is good and the playing, though occasionally a little dull and unimaginative, is otherwise on the right lines for Mozart. The chief weakness is in the reproduction of the violin tone, which is rather surprisingly harsh and lacking in sweetness. A soft or medium needle is more satisfactory than a loud one.

The other H.M.V. record, Renée Chemet's, is less significant musically, but is so well played and recorded that it can be recommended to those who can run to the price. I do not remember another instance of the "new process" dealing so faithfully with the violin. The genuine *timbre* of the instrument has been faithfully reproduced throughout its compass; possibly there is a faint suggestion of the clarinet in the low notes, but it is nothing to speak of and in no way detracts from the beauty of the playing. The piano, too, comes out better than usual in this kind of record. The Haydn *Minuet* is as jolly as one expects it to be; the *Nocturne* is less interesting.

Daisy Kennedy is an artist I have not hitherto heard upon the gramophone and she records for Duophone, whose work it has not, I think, fallen to my lot to review in these pages up to now. From the point of view of violin reproduction I am inclined to believe these are the best discs I have come across for some time, and no one interested in the progress of recorded music should fail to get hold of them. Much of the credit for the really remarkable result must go, of course, to the violinist, whose performances of Bach and Brahms are excellent. The Cramer *valse* is less attractive, and the *Viennese Folk Songs* turned out (to my great disappointment) to be definitely dull. On both records the tone of the piano comes out less well than that of the violin, and anyhow, one does not want to hear so much of its pedestrian part in the valse. In the Bach, on the other hand, it is unduly modest. I shall look forward to hearing Daisy Kennedy in music that is not "arranged."

I am not going to let the name of Dvorák deter me from saying that I think both of Mayer Gordon's pieces rather dull. His playing is quite as good as it was last month, which is saying a great deal, and the *Scherzo-Tarantelle* must be hideously difficult. I have no fault to find with this excellent piece of recording, except at the very end of the Dvorák, when I feel that for a moment all is not quite as it should be.

Peggy Cochrane's tone lacks fullness, but otherwise she is both technically and interpretatively equal to the demands of the music she plays.

## 'CELLO.

## COLUMBIA.

D 1538 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—W. H. Squire: *The Brooklet* (Schubert) and *Allemande* (Senaille, arr. Salmon).

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

E.412 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Cedric Sharpe: *Ave Maria* (Bach-Gounod) and *La Cinquantaine* (Gabriel Marie).

## VOCALION.

X.9748 (10in., 3s.).—Jacques van Lier: *Minuet* (Montorio-Van Lier) and *Sarabande* (Mazzano-Van Lier).

Squire's record does not show us the "new process" at its best. We get a tremendous tone that sounds quite like that of a trombone at times and besides the musical notes we are given a full share of the stray sounds that most 'cellos make now and then, however well they are played. But I have no fault to find with Squire's technique or his rendering and he makes that old war-horse, the Senaille *Allemande*, seem as full of life as ever. The *Brooklet* turns out to be an arrangement of Schubert's song, *Wohin?*

Considered as a piece of playing and recording, Cedric Sharpe's disc gives us little to complain of, performance and tone-quality (in both instruments) being alike excellent, while the surface is smoothness itself. But musically it is not of much importance. Bach's contribution to the *Ave Maria* fades too much into the background as soon as Gounod appears and the transposition of the whole piece down a fourth is not a happy idea, even if it does make things more convenient for the 'cello. *La Cinquantaine* is pleasant, light stuff of a kind with which we are all familiar.

Van Lier's broad, smooth phrasing in the *Sarabande* and the lightness and clear definition of his execution in the *Minuet* mark him out as an exceptionally good 'cellist and this opinion is confirmed by the steadiness and buoyancy of his rhythm. The music he plays is light, but distinctly agreeable, and the recording, though not sensational, is very sound.

## PIANO.

## BRUNSWICK.

50070A (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Leopold Godowsky: *Fantaisie-Improptu* (Chopin) and *Liebesträume* (Liszt).

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.A.761 (10in., 6s.).—V. de Pachmann: *Waltz in D flat major, Op. 64, No. 1* (Chopin) and *Waltz in G flat major, Op. 70, No. 1* (Chopin).

D.1065 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—B. Moiseivitch: *Scherzo, Op. 31* (Chopin).

D.1073 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Mark Hambourg: *Sonata in C major, Op. 2, No. 3, Finale* (Beethoven) and *Prelude in C sharp minor, Op. 3, No. 2* (Rachmaninoff).

Here is a whole galaxy of famous pianists! Indeed, where all are so good—and so different—it is hard to make a choice. On the whole, however, I think that if I were allowed to select one record from among the lot, I should "plump" for Pachmann; his performance of the D flat *Valse* is one of the very best things he has done for the gramophone, and it is splendidly recorded. He explains his own rendering in a little lecture at the beginning, so I need say nothing except that I wish he had been content to play the end as Chopin wrote it. The G flat *Valse* he does not succeed in making quite so interesting.

Godowsky has succumbed to the temptation of amplifying one of Chopin's ornamental passages in the *Fantaisie-Improptu* and one of Liszt's in the *Liebestraum* (not *Liebesträume*, by the way; I wonder if these little slips on the labels irritate other people as much as they do me). He also cuts part of the slow section in the Chopin piece, but it is only a repeat that is omitted and little or no harm is done. The chief virtue of his record is the impeccable technique; I particularly liked the way in which he emphasised the progression of the bass in parts of the *Fantaisie-Improptu*. Once more the recording is very successful. Scientific gramophonists may be interested to know that by some curious freak of acoustics the F sharps in the last bar but two of the Chopin sounded all of them an octave higher than the composer wrote them, when I tried over the record on my instrument. But no musician will let this interfere with his pleasure.

Moiseivitch also plays Chopin—the most famous of the *scherzi* (complete). The music covers the full range of the piano and contains such a liberal allowance of *fortissimo* in all registers that it is a





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| G 15915 | Believe me, if all those endearing young charms (arr. Clutsam). Piano Acc. | John Thorne (Baritone)  |
| G 15916 | She rested by the broken brook (Coleridge-Taylor). Piano Acc.              | Manuel Hemingway (Bass) |
|         | The Yellow Boreen, "Songs of the Four Nations" (A. Somervell). Piano Acc.  |                         |
|         | The Tavern Song (Howard Fisher). Piano Acc.                                |                         |
|         | Blow, Blow thou Winter Wind (J. Sarjeant). Piano Acc.                      |                         |

## INSTRUMENTAL.

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| G 15918 | Syncopated Moonbeams (Tony Fones). Novelty Piano Solo  | Mario de Pietro (Mandoline) |
|         | Danza e Cantabile (Calace). Piano Acc.   | Peggy Cochrane (Violin)     |
|         | Bolero (Calace). Piano Acc.  |                             |
| G 15919 | The Temple Bells and Kashmiri Song (Woodforde-Finden) "Four Indian Love Lyrics." Piano Acc.              |                             |
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|         | The Lake of Shadows (Leslie Paul)                        | (Under the direction of Lieut. Andrew Harris) |
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| G 15925 | The Two of Us (Phillips-Campbell-Connelly). Orch. Acc.   | Charman and Gray |
|         | When I hear that song of Twilight (Gilbert-Scott-Silver). Orch. Acc.                           | Bob Johnson      |
| G 15926 | In the Gloaming of Wyoming (Val Valentine). Orch. Acc.   | Charman and Gray |
|         | Smile a little bit (Schenck-Morton-Shevlm). Orch. and Ukulele Acc.                             | Billy Desmond    |
| G 15927 | Ukulele Lullaby (Gene Williams). Orch. Acc.  | Billy Desmond    |
|         | Speak (though you only say Farewell) (Horatio Nicholls). Orch. Acc.                            | Billy Williams   |
|         | I'm sitting on top of the world (Lewis-Young-Henderson) "R.S.V.P. Revue." Orch. and Piano Acc. |                  |
| G 15928 | I'm on my way to Dreamland (Leslie-Green). Orch. Acc.  |                  |
| G 15763 | Put a bit of Powder on it Father (Billy Williams)  |                  |
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## LATEST DANCE MUSIC.

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| G 15929 | The Two of Us (Phillips-Campbell-Connelly). Fox Trot  | Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra          |
|         | Who loved you best? (Whipple-Wylie-Davidson). Fox Trot  | Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra          |
| G 15930 | April Blossoms (Youmans-Stothart). Intro. "Wildflower." "Wildflower." Fox Trot with vocal refrain | Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra          |
|         | Bambalina (Youmans-Stothart). Fox Trot. "Wildflower"  | Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra          |
| G 15931 | My Castle in Spain (Isham Jones). Fox Trot with vocal refrain "Turned Up"                         | Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra          |
|         | Along the Old Lake Trail (Tierney). Fox Trot. "Kid Boots"   | Ohio Novelty Band                          |
| G 15932 | Peaceful Valley (Willard Robison). Fox Trot   | The Old Virginians                         |
|         | I'm sitting on top of the world (Lewis-Young-Henderson) "R.S.V.P. Revue"                          | Los Angeles Dance Orchestra                |
| G 15933 | Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue (Lewis-Young-Henderson) Fox Trot. "R.S.V.P. Revue"                    | Cleveland Society Orchestra                |
|         | Bamboola (Conrad-Cirina). Fox Trot  |  |
|         | Freshie (Greer-Berg-Greer). Fox Trot with vocal refrain   |  |
| G 15934 | Show me the way to go Home (Irving King). Fox Trot with vocal refrain (American Interpretation)   | Harry Bidgood's Dance Orchestra            |
| G 15935 | Without You (Conrad-Morris). Waltz  | The Roving Minstrels                       |
|         | Love Bound (Kerr-Rupp). Fox Trot with vocal refrain   |  |

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severe test for any gramophone or record. I was very well satisfied with the result, which gave me a full, round tone (except for one or two lapses), with little or no "blast" and a magnificent bass. Moiseivitch is a player who has always sounded well on a record and clearly the "new process" suits him no less admirably than the old. But he must be careful of his technique; some of the passage-work here is by no means clear.

Mark Hambourg's rendering of the *Finale* from Beethoven's very early *Sonata in C* is suitably brilliant, and his execution of the difficult last page almost beyond praise. The only flies in what is, on the whole, excellent ointment, are a certain lack of clearness that crops up from time to time and is rather suggestive of carelessness, and a "tinniness" that mars an otherwise satisfactory piece of recording. This latter defect occurs again in the Rachmaninoff, and makes me doubtful whether the "new process" is as yet quite capable of dealing with playing of the Hambourg stamp. By the way, surely the *C sharp minor Prelude* is rather *vieux jeu* in this year of grace. Even the most eloquent performance fails to stir me any longer, and Hambourg's rendering is curiously aloof.

# ORGAN.

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

B.2263 (10in., 3s.).—Herbert Dawson: *Idylle* (Elgar) and *Even-song* (Easthope Martin).

B.2274 (10in., 3s.).—Herbert Dawson: *Easter Fantasia*.

The reproduction here is as good as anything we have had in the way of organ music. I was particularly struck by the fidelity of the effect of the full reeds in Easthope Martin's piece, and the little *Idylle* (not one of Elgar's masterpieces) shows that the qualities of the soft flue stops can be caught with no less success. I suppose it is with the idea of demonstrating still further the possibilities of organ recording that the *Easter Fantasia* has been issued; we could do with some good organ records of Easter hymns and this is a very suitable time of year for them to appear. But they must be well done. Unfortunately, I have never heard a more inartistic treatment of these great tunes than Herbert Dawson gives us. His one idea seems to be to show off the resources of his instrument and he cuts the melodies to pieces for this purpose; the dynamic directions in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* are a model of restraint, compared to this sort of thing.

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

E.416 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Regina'd Goss-Custard: *Fugue à la Gigue* (Bach) and *Toccata in F* (Widor).

This record, which arrives just as we go to press, is what I have been waiting for, an example of what can nowadays be made of a record of really fine organ music. It deserves the success it will no doubt achieve, if only for the fine playing and painstaking reproduction; but I am not sure that it was wise to select two such fast pieces as this Bach *Fugue* in G, and the famous *Toccata* from Widor's Fifth Symphony. Quick passages seldom or never sound really clear on the organ, and though Bach's attempt to make this ponderous instrument trip a lively measure is, in its way, a fine *tour de force*, yet I doubt if the part-writing will sound clear to those who don't know the work—and it is not one of the most familiar. The brilliant *Toccata*, again, is occasionally blurred (I have never heard it sound as Widor obviously meant it to), and several bars are omitted near the end. But the great Choral-like pedal part is splendidly sonorous.—P. L.

# OPERATIC

ENID CRUICKSHANK (contralto).—The years roll by, no comfort bringing (*Recit. et Aria de Lia*) from *L'Enfant Prodigue* (Debussy), and *Card Song* from *Carmen* (Bizet). Voc. K.05221, 12in. (4s. 6d.).

LUIGI CILLA (tenor).—Addio Mignon from *Mignon* (Thomas), and *Romanza* from *La Favorita* (Donizetti). Imperial 1565, 10in., 2s.

LUIGI CILLA (tenor).—*Romanza* from *Mignon* (Thomas), and *Questa o Quella* from *Rigoletto* (Verdi). Imperial 1564, 10in., 2s.

MAARTJE OFFERS (contralto).—*Erbarne dich mein Gott* from *Matthäus Passion* (Bach). H.M.V., D.B.907, 12in., 8s. 6d.

ELISE VON CATOPOL (soprano), ELSE KNEPEL (soprano), and GRETE MANCKE (contralto).—*Weihä, Waga, Woge*, and *Lugt Schwestern* from *Rheingold* (Wagner). Parlo. E.10432, 12in., 4s. 6d.

EMMY BETTENDORF (soprano).—*Ma dall'arido stelo*, Act 2, and *Morré, ma prima in grazia*, Act 3, *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Verdi). Parlo. E.10431, 12in., 4s. 6d.

ELDA DI VEROLI (soprano).—*Ardon gl'incensi* (*Mad Scene*) from *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Donizetti), and *Dov'è l'Indiana bruna* (*Bell Song*) from *Lakmé* (Delibes). Duo. G.S.7002, 12in., 5s. 6d.

ELDA DI VEROLI (soprano).—*Ombra leggera* from *Dinorah* (Meyerbeer), and *Qui la voce* from *Puritani* (Bellini). Duo. G.S.7001, 12in., 5s. 6d.

IFOR THOMAS (tenor).—*Vesti la giubba* from *Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo), and *Che gelida manina* from *La Bohème* (Puccini). Duo. G.S.7003, 12in., 5s. 6d.

GERTRUDE KAPPEL (soprano).—*Brühildes Schlussgefang* from *Götterdämmerung* (Wagner). Polydor 66099, 12in., 5s. 9d.

MARIA OLCZEWSKA (contralto).—*Höre mit Sinn* and *So sitzt er* from *Götterdämmerung* (Wagner). Polydor 72982, 12in., 6s. 9d.

SELMA KURZ (soprano).—*Caro Nome* from *Rigoletto* (Verdi), and *Addio* from *La Traviata* (Verdi). Polydor 72845, 12in., 6s. 9d.

ALICE RAVEAU (contralto).—*Habañera* from *Carmen* (Bizet), and *Handel's Largo*. Actuelle 15218, 12in., 6s.

RICCARDO STRACCIARI (baritone).—*Te Deum* from *La Tosca*, and *O tu bell'astro* from *Tannhäuser* (Wagner). Col. 7372, 8s. 6d.

L. BORI (soprano) and T. SCHIPA (tenor).—*Death Scene* from *La Bohème* (Puccini). Two parts, *Sono andati* and *O Dio, Mimi*. H.M.V., D.B.911, 12in., 8s. 6d.

HEDDEN FOSTER (baritone).—*Even bravest heart* from *Faust* (Gounod), and *Song of the flea* (Moussorgsky). Beltona 6039, 10in., 3s.

Enid Cruickshank.—A deservedly popular singer, whose excellent work at the Old Vic. and with the Carl Rosa Company has long been recognised, here gives us in English a couple of familiar extracts. The voice sounds best in the *Card Scene* from *Carmen*, where she is, of course, quite at home; but even there Miss Cruickshank shows little sign of overcoming the tremolo which is her only serious defect. Apart from that the records deserve all praise.

Luigi Cilla.—Here are two discs at the very reasonable figure of 2s. each, that may be listened to with a certain amount of pleasure. In one *Wilhelm Meister's farewell to Mignon* is associated with the *Romanza* from the first act of *La Favorita*; in the other the air from the last act of *Mignon* with the lively *Questa o quella* from *Rigoletto*. Signor Cilla has a pleasant voice and sings without effort. He may not be among the great tenors, but he is also not among the expensive ones. The text, of course, is Italian.

Maartje Offers.—One is glad to welcome so notable an addition to the repertory as the beautiful contralto air from the *St. Matthew Passion*, sung in German by a capable artist. To be ideal, Bach's wonderful music demands more repose and a steadier voice, while the violin obbligato, well played by Isolde Menges, is at times too loud. Still, the style in both cases is traditionally correct and pure, which is saying a great deal, and the recording on both sides of the disc leaves nothing to be desired.

Elise von Catopol, Else Knepel, and Grete Mancke.—The tuneful music of the three Rhine-daughters is far from being so easy as these ladies make it sound. They are obviously in the habit of singing it together whilst floating gracefully beneath the sunlit waters—a feat that Wagner's imagination could alone have conjured up. Flosshilde is a trifle shaky, but the Woglinde and Wellgunde are both excellent, and all three are well in tune and rhythmical. The orchestration, too, receives careful attention, though the lower strings are weak. Thanks to numerous cuts and the complete elimination of Alberich (whom nobody misses), the two sides of the disc furnish pretty nearly all that one wants to hear of the opening scene from *Rheingold*.

Emmy Bettendorf.—The unlucky heroine of Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* has two beautiful airs allotted to her, one in the second and the other in the third—not the fourth—act of the opera. I can hardly conceive a more tender and expressive rendering than they are here vouchsafed by Emmy Bettendorf. Her sweet



legato phrasing, the musical quality of her tone, and her flawless intonation lend the utmost charm to singing replete with all the requisite touches of pathos, passion, and remorse. Both pieces are well accompanied.

*Elda di Veroli*.—The soprano who is responsible for these additions to the Duophone catalogue possesses a pretty and well-trained voice, more remarkable, perhaps, for a neat, facile technique than variety of colour or positive brilliancy of style. What she does, however, is done without effort and satisfies the ear, and that much, in hackneyed pieces that have been recorded by the world's most famous singers, amounts to a very creditable achievement. I note more especially admirable breath control, a first-rate staccato, and nice crisp scale passages. The *Bell Song* from *Lakmé* and the *Shadow Song* from *Dinorah* are the best of the group.

*Ifor Thomas*.—Tenors are at liberty to imitate the modern Italian method as much as they please so long as they avoid the *vibrato*. Apart from this blemish, the reproductions of *Vesti la giubba* and *Che gelida manina* on this disc will be found quite up to the average in every respect.

*Gertrude Kappel*.—There can be no need to tell frequenters of recent *Ring* cycles at Covent Garden how splendidly the part of Brünnhilde is portrayed by this gifted artist. She compares in it with more than one of the great sopranos who won encomiums from Wagner himself, in virtue not only of fine acting but breadth and nobility of conception and magnificent declamation. Such are the qualities (it is a pleasure to be able to say it) reflected to a great extent in these new records (one disc, two parts) of the sublime closing scene from *Götterdämmerung*. Happily, moreover, the combination of voice and instruments is skilfully accomplished, the latter being sufficiently yet not too much in evidence. A capable conductor is obviously at work in this, and the general effect impressively realises the heroic grandeur of the final climax.

*Maria Olczewska*.—Almost identical with the words just written must be my criticism of the earlier scene from *Götterdämmerung*, wherein Waltraute, one of the Valkyries, visits Brünnhilde and implores her to give up the ring. This fine episode, wherein Waltraute describes the decay of the gods in Valhalla and the doom and despair of their father, Wotan, is, perhaps, the most pathetic in the whole of the tetralogy. Mme. Olczewska, with her superb voice, declaims it superbly and invests it with extraordinary interest and significance.

*Selma Kurz*.—This clever singer is more at home in *Caro nome* than the touching passage in the *Traviata*, where the dying Violetta bids farewell to her stormy past. Still, we owe her thanks for recording the *Addio*—a really beautiful bit of Verdi, in which the famous composer declared that Patti used invariably to make him weep. Selma Kurz certainly puts a tinge of tender melancholy into it.

*Alice Raveau*.—Quite a contrast, again, the two sides of this Pathé disc! Yet the same agreeable contralto sounds equally well in the *Habañera* from *Carmen* and Handel's *Largo*; and saying that is equivalent to a high compliment. It sounds rather odd to hear the *Largo* sung in French, but after all why not? Altogether the record is an interesting one.

*Riccardo Stracciari*.—Fine tone and plenty of it characterises the finale to the first act of *Tosca*—bells, orchestra, all complete, but without chorus, which really does not matter. Less negligible, though, is the faintness of the accompaniment to the *Tannhäuser* extract. At times it cannot be heard at all. Fortunately, the soloist does not seem to mind. He goes on comfortably without apparent support and with all imaginable suavity and opulence of tone.

*L. Bori* and *T. Schipa*.—A complete and absolutely adequate vocal representation of the scene of Mimi's death. What little there is for the tenor to do is capitally done; but the honours on both sides of the disc are unquestionably carried off by La Bori, who, being a first-rate artist and an Italian to her finger-tips, knows how to make the most of every bar of Puccini's music.

*Hebden Foster*.—I find much more artistic merit, alike as regards singing and characterisation, in the performance of Moussorgsky's song *The Flea* than in that of Valentine's air from *Faust*. The sardonic humour of the Russian ditty is quite cleverly conveyed, and on that account, therefore, I warmly recommend this 10 in. record.

HERMAN KLEIN.

## SONGS

### ZONOPHONE.

Bessie Jones (soprano) with Orchestra: *With verdure clad* (Haydn's *The Creation*) and *I know that my Redeemer liveth* (Handel's *Messiah*). A.299 (12in., 4s.).

### HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

Tudor Davies (tenor): *Thou art risen, my beloved* (Coleridge-Taylor's *Songs of Sun and Shade*) and *Love went a-riding* (Frank Bridge). E.414 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Elsie Suddaby (soprano): *Nymphs and Shepherds* (Purcell's *The Libertine*) and *My mother bids me bind my hair* (Haydn). E.413 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Peter Dawson (bass-baritone) with Orchestra: *Jerusalem* (C. H. H. Parry) and *The Palms* (Faure)—*The Border Ballad* (F. H. Cowen) and *The Glory of the Sea* (Sanderson). B.2271 and 2275 (two 10in., 3s. each).

Tito Schipa (tenor) with Orchestra: *Jota* (No. 4 of *Seven Popular Spanish Songs*, arr. de Falla) and *Madrigal español* (Huerte). DA.751 (10in., 6s.).

### VOCALION.

Roy Henderson (baritone) with the Aeolian Orchestra: *Free-booter Songs*—*Minnie Song*, *The Rebel*, *Son of mine and Up in the saddle* (William Wallace). X.9744-5 (two 10in., 3s. each).

Malcolm McEachern (bass) accompanied by Stanley Chapple: *When the Sergeant-Major's on Parade* (Longstaffe) and *Good Fellows* (Lyall-Phillips). X.9747 (10in., 3s.).

John Mathewson (baritone) accompanied by George Short: *Scots wha hae* (arr. MacPherson) and *Corn Rigs* (arr. G. Short). X.9688 (10in., 3s.).

Paula St. Clair (contralto) accompanied by Stanley Chapple: *Mélisande in the Wood* (Goetz) and *Daffodil Gold* (Robertson-Hodgson). X.9746 (10 in., 3s.).

### COLUMBIA.

Frank Mullings (tenor): *Blow, blow, thou winter wind and O mistress mine* from *Three Shakespeare Songs* (Quilter). D.1537 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Dame Clara Butt (contralto): *Soft-footed snow* (Sigurd Lie) and *Ships of my dreams* (Wilkinson-Stephenson). X.330 (10in., 6s.).

Hubert Eisdell (tenor) accompanied by the composer, with 'cello obbligato: *O dry those tears* and *The Reason* (Teresa del Riego). L.1728 (12in. 6s. 6d.).

Lilian Gibson (contralto): *You along o' me* (Sanderson) and *Homing* (del Riego). 3899 (10in. 3s.).

Doris Vane (soprano) with orchestra: *Summer* (Löhr) and *So this is love* (Little Miss Bluebeard, Goetz). 3872 (10in., 3s.).

Edgar Coyle (baritone): *The arrow and the song* (Balfe) and *Off in the stilly night* (Thos. Moore). 3900 (10in., 3s.).

### ACO.

John Thorne (baritone): *The Yellow Boreen* (from *Songs of the Four Nations*, arr. Arthur Somervell) and *She rested by the broken brook* (Coleridge-Taylor). G.15915 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

### BELTONA.

Hughes Macklin (tenor): *Hame* (H. Walford Davies) and *A farewell* (S. Liddle). 6033 (10in., 3s.).

Jean Summers (soprano): *Ca' the yowes to the knowes* (Traditional) and *Bonnie Prince Charlie* (Cam' ye by Atholl?) (Traditional, arr. Neil Gow). 6034 (10in., 3s.).

Winifred Brady (soprano): *Irish Love Song* (the Londonderry Air, arr. A. A. Needham) with violin obbligato, and *The Lover's Curse* (arr. H. Hughes). 6027 (10in., 3s.).

Jean Summers (soprano): *Down in the forest* (Landon Ronald) and *Love's a merchant* (Molly Carew). 6035 (10in., 3s.).

Herbert Thorpe (tenor): *Mountain Lovers* (W. H. Squire) and *My Queen* (Blumenthal). 6036 (10in., 3s.).

Catherine Stewart (contralto): *Angus MacDonald* (Jos. Roeckel) and *Ye banks and braes* (arr. Martin Shaw). 6038 (10in., 3s.).

# PARLOPHONE.

Emmy Bettendorf (soprano): *Morgen, Op. 27* (R. Strauss) and the Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin: *Symphonic Poem, Macbeth* (Richard Strauss). E.10425 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

# PATHEPHONE.

Glyn Eastman (baritone), with orchestra: *The Floral Dance* (Moss), and *At Grendon Fair* (Marie). 5282 (12in., 3s. 6d.).

Machine used: H.M.V. new model, No. 161, with sound-box No. 4.

Zonophone give us, to my mind, easily the best record we have of *With verdure clad*, and a fair, but much-cut version of *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. The Haydn is really delightful. It is, perhaps, a wee bit matter-of-fact. Bars 64-82 (inclusive) are cut, i.e., most of the "second subject" in the recapitulation (for, as Macfarren remarked, this air is in "First Movement" or "Sonata" form). This is not a disastrous cut, and is at any rate far better than cutting the whole "Development," as has formerly been done. The orchestra is well-nigh perfect; the tone is, of course, that of the new recording. I prefer a soft needle. The singer, Bessie Jones, is very good indeed; her phrasing is not perfect, but is not offensive, which can very rarely be said of oratorio singing even by "stars." I quarrel with her most violently over her diction, which is similar to and worse than Elsie Suddaby's (see below).

What there is of the Handel air is good, but not quite equal to the Haydn. Mozart's orchestration is used.

One succumbs more and more to this really fine (and fairly cheap) Tudor Davies record. This seems to me almost the ideal interpretation of two inspiring, emotional, but English songs—songs which make big demands indeed for their ideal interpretation. There is gorgeous outpouring of tone, and masterly, finely-moulded phrasing. There is, I think, practically none of the rigidity, tightness and forcing with which Tudor Davies has frequently been justly charged. At times his diction is still untrue; occasionally his vowels are false, sometimes he exaggerates consonants, especially r's. Given time, one might reconsider this record, but I feel sure it is at the least one of Davies's best.

Elsie Suddaby's record would be almost a pure joy, if it weren't for a most objectionable distortion of the English language. Most sopranos of her type give to nearly every vowel sound an affected sort of childish brightness, presumably to make the most of their silvery tones. At any rate, the words are generally fairly distinct (though distinctness is not a strong point in such singing), but they are neither the King's nor anybody else's English. The Haydn song is treated the worse, and also Elsie Suddaby is hardly simple enough with it. Diction in the Purcell is slightly less objectionable, and it might be possible to forget one's annoyance in delight in the general spirit, and in the very rare virtue of splendid phrasing. I do not know the edition used, but it is very true to the original as given in the Purcell Society edition.

Peter Dawson has given us what seems to be the first recording of Parry's setting of Blake's *Jerusalem*, which seems likely to become deservedly a national hymn. He sings it inspiringly, though (in the first part) perhaps too straightforwardly. The well-known *Border Ballad* is another of those forceful songs in which he revels.

Tito Schipa's voice is put to its best use in one of the thrilling popular Spanish songs arranged by de Falla. The (so-called?) *Madrigal* is decidedly good, but does not carry one away as does the *Jota*. These H.M.V. records give me nothing new to say about the new orchestral recording.

A good pair of records is made of Wallace's rousing *Freebooter Songs*. Roy Henderson has by now an established place. He is always interesting and good to hear, but his virile yet artistic style and firm, fresh voice are specially happy in spirited songs such as these. Some may, perhaps, find him a little hard even here; certainly there might be a little more shading, especially in *Son of mine*, though this song tends of its own accord to be mawkish. The orchestra is good, on the whole, with pleasant tone, but without the clarity of the best modern recording.

Here's the sergeant-major's song again with McEachern in the name-part, but with only a piano instead of the band. The sergeant-major's speech seems a trifle thick. Mathewson's Scottish record may be strongly recommended; no comments seem necessary. Paula St. Clair sings the Goetz song adequately; the other song is of the same type. Rhythm seems to receive no excessive consideration.

Frank Mullings, using his voice and his other gifts for two of Quilter's most popular songs, provides what should prove a favourite. He fulfils one's hopes, and there are practically no stage mannerisms—just a little, perhaps, at "not endure," for instance. One of the gramophone's delightful little weaknesses appears with the words "Kith me, thweet."

Dame Clara Butt has recorded another interesting song this month. *Soft-footed snow* is one of the most successful songs in existence. You realise that after playing it through half-a-dozen times, when you really expect to look out of the window and find snow on the ground. In "atmosphere" it is worthy of its Norwegian composer, and it does not stop at that. This record leaves me in ignorance of many of the words.

Two of Teresa del Riego's greatest favourites sung by Hubert Eisdell and accompanied by the composer, come up to expectations, and will doubtless have a great welcome. The cello obbligato gets in the way a little, especially in the instrumental interludes, where he has a smooth sustained counterpoint, against the chief melody with which the piano is impotent. Eisdell's words are not yet perfect. The other three Columbia's are good recording of drawing-room ballads, well performed, if one accepts heavy tremolos.

One of Ireland's sublime love-songs is *The Yellow Boreen*. Of all half-crown records John Thorne's *Aco's* most frequently give us sound singing of sound songs. His diction would do with touching up here and there, and his phrasing is not quite perfect, but how many singers do phrase even passing well? The effectiveness of the accompaniment to the Irish folk-song is largely due to the pianist, who has wisely used octaves liberally. The Coleridge-Taylor on the reverse is worth having.

I have spent a long time trying to think what to say about Hame, and I give it up. Either it has all the beauty of the best Scottish folk-songs, or it is a cheap imitation. Hear it, and don't decide too quickly. I like Macklin's singing of it, excepting perhaps, a tiny suspicion of melodrama and a few little faults of diction. The Scottish and Irish songs of Jean Summers and Winifred Brady would be very good, but I consider they are completely ruined by the biggest wobbles I've ever heard in my life—the real vox humana-with-tremulant. This remark applies also to the other record of Jean Summers, and almost equally to Herbert Thorpe's "Winners." Catherine Stewart avoids excess of either vice or virtue, as do her songs. The result is mere boredom. Beltona's recordings are not quite their best, though good.

Emmy Bettendorf's singing is as beautiful as her best, but this song (though sometimes considered a masterpiece) seems to me to represent the degeneration of German romanticism. The violin monotonously plays a long-drawn, repetitive melody in which I can find no quality but sweetness, and the singer adds a counterpoint not very different from Wagnerian recitative. The Symphonic Poem is being reviewed with the instrumental records.

Glyn Eastman's recording of *The Floral Dance* has the right spirit, so also has *At Grendon Fair*, a similar song. The tone is pleasant, there are some good orchestral touches, and Eastman's diction is generally good. Altogether a good record of these songs, for all who have the apparatus for playing it.—C. M. C.

# CHORAL

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.1070 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Choir and Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Albert Coates: *Baal Chorus* and *Thanks be to God from Elijah* (Mendelssohn).

D.1071 and 1072 (12in., 13s.).—Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by A. Coates: *Venusberg Music* and *Bacchanale*, and *Prelude, Act 3, Tannhäuser* (Wagner).

D.1074 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Chorus and Symphony Orchestra, conducted by A. Coates: *Pilgrims' Choruses, Acts 1 and 3 Tannhäuser* (Wagner).

The chorus in *Elijah* is rather "under the weather" of the orchestra, and the words are scarcely ever audible. The violins' surges of sound get in the way too much. Coates adopts a very smart pace in *Baal*. We must have very much better balance, both in the choir, and as between choir and orchestra, before we can get full pleasure from such a record as this. The only things about it I care for are the general spirit and the volume. The work was evidently sung in a large building. Again, in *Thanks be*, the



orchestra too largely takes command. I think Coates is inclined to aim at dramatic effect at any cost; and the cost is sometimes too great.

The surge and sway of sound in the *Venusberg* music is remarkable. Certainly this is enough to reave any man of his senses, if accompanied by appropriately wild goings-on by the "abandoned females" in attendance on Venus. You must certainly hear this letting loose of devilment.

The choir comes in on the third side. It contains one or two wobbly singers who do not help. The volume and balance are good, though I could wish the effect were more ethereal.

The prelude to the third act (which occupies side 4) contains references to the Pilgrims' song, to Elizabeth's air in the second act, to Tannhäuser's narrative, and to the Venusberg music.

This is apparently the opera version of the music, not that longer form in which Wagner originally wrote the prelude. The "Curse" is only slightly dealt with in this (recorded) form, whereas in the original version it occupied some sixty-four bars. Coates seems to have hurried the pace to get a sufficient amount of music on the disc. This is a distinct mistake, I feel. Dignity and impressiveness are lost.

The Pilgrims' choruses are, on the whole, well balanced, though a certain roughness of tone creeps in sometimes. The soloists are not named, on my sample record. They are all very resonant—the bass rather too much so. The end of the second side is well managed in this performance. I like the broad style. K. K.

## NEW-POOR RECORDS

Machine used, Peridulce Cabinet; sound-box, Peridulce; needles Euphonic.

\* \* \*

Last month the letter from Mr. Landy concerning the records sung by Sirota and by Rosenblatt interested me very much. I am not of Hebrew extraction myself and the wonderful record sung by Sirota, and which I then referred to, was a surprise to me. I had no idea the vocal solo work in Jewish churches was on such a high grade. I tried to get the two 12in. Imperial (de luxe) operatic records sung by Sirota (those Mr. Landy mentioned) when I was last in London, but was unsuccessful because they are not now being pressed.

\* \* \*

ACO.—A well-balanced but not very vigorously recorded rendering on the PIANOFORTE of Scarlatti's *Sonata in D minor* (2s. 6d.), played by Maurice Cole easily heads this list. And then there are three really good vocal numbers: SOPRANO, *The Banks of Allan Water* (2s. 6d.), sung by Thea Phillips; TENOR, *On wings of song* (2s. 6d.), sung by Leonard Gowings; BY THE WATER, a BARTONE song of Colman Young's (2s. 6d.), sung by John Thorne.

BELTONE.—Manuel Hemingway is an absolutely perfect Bass for recording, his workmanship and the quality of his voice leave nothing to be desired; in *Sergeant's Blow, blow thou winter wind* (2s. 6d.) and its reverse, *Invictus*, the recording both of the singing and of the piano accompaniment is as good as the performing. The Beltone list is great on Scottish numbers, one of the best is *Ye banks and braes*, sung by Catherine Stewart, CANTALTO. Really good examples of recorded CORNET AND PIANO tone in favourite old song tunes, *In an old-fashioned town* (2s. 6d.). POPULAR SONG, *I'm sitting on top of the world*, very prettily sung by John Roberts.

HOMOCHORD.—A sub-list will shortly be obtainable (from 19, City Road, E.C.) of Mr. Sternberg's fine recordings of the pianoforte alone and of solo instruments in combination with the piano. There is a note on the back page about some of these records that are in my own collection. This month we have for the PIANOFORTE *Eugene Onegin* paraphrase, played by Gertrude Meller (4s.) and Sarasate's VIOLIN solo *Gipsy Airs* (4s.), most brilliantly and perfectly played by Solloway and just as wonderfully recorded. Solloway also has a 10in. record (2s. 6d.) of the extraordinary *Le Vent*. For an UNCOMMON RECORD the PIANO AND TRAPS performance of *Prudy* (2s. 6d.) is easily the best thing of the kind I ever heard or could have imagined. A sweet SAXOPHONE solo is Rudy Wiedoft's *Saxarella* (2s. 6d.). PIANO FOX-TROT, *Tricky Triz* (2s. 6d.).

IMPERIAL.—Charles Bonheur, baritone, sings POPULAR SONGS very nicely. I think *Moonlight and roses* (2s.) the best, but *Help*

to make a little sunshine (2s.) runs it very closely. Of the fox-trots in Jazz I should put *Moonlight and roses* first and *Bambalina* second.

PARLOPHONE.—With the exception of the incomparable Vincent Lopez Jazz number, *Deep in my heart, dear*, waltz (2s. 6d.), the records of this make that I must call attention to this month are sixpence each beyond our ordinary prices, but those who buy them I know will forgive them this small failing. There are six 10in. TANGOS, for dancing to, performed in Buenos Aires by a properly constituted tango band and of this kind of music entirely in a class by themselves. The three best pairs, I think, are numbers 3208, 3206, 3209, in the order mentioned. Those who bought the grand half-crown example of 'CELLO recording I mentioned last month will also buy the two 12in. discs of Barjanski's *Cello Concerto in G minor*, if they are fond of contrapuntal string music.

REGAL.—A splendid record of Kenneth Walter's BARITONE voice is *Border Ballad* (2s. 6d.) and Manuella fully maintains his reputation with a VIOLIN solo, *Pierrot Serenade* (2s. 6d.).

VELVET FACE AND WINNER.—Going to press before I have had an opportunity of hearing the new issue, I will take this opportunity of saying that the following records I have already mentioned are greatly beloved by all my musical friends and undoubtedly should be in every collection of high-class issues: *Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra*, with Leor Goossens at the solo instrument, 12in. (4s.), and a magnificent new recording of 2LO Military Band (with kettle drums) in Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* (2s. 6d.). Both these are strong enough not to be hopelessly emasculated when using fibre needles.

ZONOPHONE.—I do not hear any deep pedal notes in it, but an otherwise perfect GRAND ORGAN record, and a most useful one at this season, is *Jesus Christ is risen to-day* (2s. 6d.).

ULTIMATE SELECTIONS.—GRAND ORGAN, *Easter Hymn* (ZONO.). PIANOFORTE: 12in., *Eugene Onegin* (HOMO.); 10in., *Sonata in D minor* (ACO.). VIOLIN: 12in., *Gipsy Airs* (HOMO.); 10in., *Pierrot Serenade* (REGAL.). 'CELLO: *Concerto in G minor* (PARLO.) two 12in. discs. SOPRANO: *Banks of Allan Water* (ACO.). BARTONE: *Border Ballad* (REGAL.). TENOR: *On wings of song* (ACO.). BASS: *Invictus* (BELTONE). SCOTS SONG: *Ye banks and braes* (BELTONE). TANGO: *Silbando* (PARLO.). WALTZ: *Deep in my heart, dear* (PARLO.). POPULAR SONG: *I'm sitting on top of the world* (BELTONE). H. T. B.

## BAND RECORDS

### ACO.

G.15899 and G.15900 (two 10in., 5s.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *William Tell Overture* (Rossini).

G.15922 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *The Lake of Shadows* (Leslie Paul) and *Dreamland Bells* (Howgill).

### ACTUELLE.

15214 (size 12, 3s. 6d.).—Garde Républicaine Band: *Marche Slav* (Tchaikovsky) and *Le Bienheureux* (Leroux).

15217 (size 12, 3s. 6d.).—Garde Républicaine Band: *Danza Exotica, Parts 1 and 2* (Mascagni).

### BELTONE.

932 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Beltone Military Band: *Neapolitan Scenes* (Massenet). Part 1, *The Dance*, and Part 2, *The Fête*.

### COLUMBIA.

9073 and 9074 (two 12in., 9s.).—Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards: *The Wembley Military Tattoo, Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4*.

9080 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards, Harold Williams, and Chorus: *Pomp and Circumstance March and Land of Hope and Glory* (Sir Edward Elgar).

### DUOPHONE.

A.1027 (12in., 4s.).—Mackenzie-Rogan's Military Band: *Morning Noon and Night Overture* (Suppé) and *In a Persian Market* (Ketèlbey).

B.5113 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Mackenzie-Rogan's Military Band: *Old Comrades March* (Teike) and *Semper Fidelis March* (Souza).

B.5114 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Mackenzie-Rogan's Military Band: *H.M.S. Pinafore Selection, Parts 1 and 2* (Sullivan).

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- 1563** { The Two of Us (Phillips, Campbell and Connelly).  
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.  
When I Hear that Song of Twilight (Gilbert, Scott and Silver).  
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1562** { Moonlight and Roses (Black and Moret).  
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.  
I'm so Terribly in Love with You (Vivian Ellis).  
Sung by Guy Victor, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1561** { I'm Sitting on Top of the World (Ray Henderson).  
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.  
Help to Make a Little Sunshine (J. R. Gregory). Sunshine Song.  
Sung by Robert Kinnear, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1560** { The More I See of Mary Seymour, the More I Want to See (Butler, Evans and Strong).  
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.  
Twenty-five and Six (Joe Jackley).  
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.

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## The Gregorian Singers Quartette

- 1558** { Ukulele Lullaby (Gene Williams). Orchestral Accomp.  
Adelai (Joseph Spurin). Orchestral Accomp.

## Dances

### Sam Lanin's Dance Orchestra

- 1557** { I'm Sitting on Top of the World (Lewis, Young and Henderson).  
Fox Trot.  
I Wonder where my Baby is To-night! (Gus Kahn and Walter Donaldson). Fox Trot.
- 1556** { Wildflower (Vincent Youmans and Stoddart). Fox Trot.  
Played by Majestic Dance Orchestra.  
Bambalina (Vincent Youmans). Fox Trot.  
Played by Roy Collins' Dance Orchestra.
- 1555** { Clap Hands! Here Comes Charlie! (Rose-Macdonald-Meyer).  
Fox Trot. Played by the New Orleans Dance Orchestra.  
I'm Knee Deep in Daisies (Goodwin). Fox Trot.  
Played by The Hollywood Dance Orchestra.
- 1554** { Pal of My Cradle Days (Montgomery-Al Piantadosi). Waltz.  
Played by the Imperial Dance Orchestra.  
The Prisoner's Song (Guy Massey). Waltz.  
Played by Eddie Peabody's Dance Orchestra. (Vocal Chorus, Vernon Dalhart.)

### Greening's Dance Orchestra

- 1553** { The Two of Us (Phillips, Campbell and Connelly). Fox Trot.  
(Vocal Chorus.)  
Help to Make a Little Sunshine (J. R. Gregory). Fox Trot.  
(Vocal Chorus.)
- 1552** { Moonlight and Roses (Black and Moret). Fox Trot. (Vocal Chorus.)  
The More I See of Mary Seymour, the More I Want to See,  
(Strong, Evans and Butler). Fox Trot. (Vocal Chorus.)

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**HIS MASTER'S VOICE.**

C.1244 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Band of H.M. Royal Air Force: In a Chinese Temple Garden** (Ketèlbey) and **The Gondolier and Nightingale, Op. 49** (Langey).

B.2239 (10in., 3s.).—**Band of H.M. Royal Air Force: Wien bleibt Wien** (Schranell) and **Father of Victory March** (Ganne).

**VOCALION.**

K.05220 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Band of H.M. Life Guards: Martial Moments, Parts 1 and 2** (arr. A. Winter).

K.05224 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Band of H.M. Life Guards: Nell Gwynne Dances, Parts 1 and 2** (German).

A complete (so far as I can judge without a score) and competent rendering of the famous *William Tell Overture* for five shillings is good value. The music lends itself admirably to division into four more or less equal parts. The flute, in the obbligato to the oboe solo on side two, is rather incoherent in the lower register, but otherwise the recording is good.

*Lake of Shadows* and *Dreamland Bells* will appeal to those who like sweet nothings. Both are unadulterated saccharine. The former is both more tuneful and better recorded.

The Actuelle records of the Garde Républicaine Band are at times rather monotonous in their lack of variety of tone colour. In *Marche Slave* the tubophone gives welcome relief in this direction and is very well recorded. *Le Bienheureux* is very commonplace and played stodgily. *Danza Exotica* is quite new to me and in parts is strongly reminiscent of Luigini. The music is, on the whole, disappointing, and my copy of the record makes some very unpleasant noises. It may be that the instrument playing the air at the beginning is one with which I am unacquainted, but if it is the flute, as I imagine, it sounds as if some mischievous boy had put a pea in it! The recording throughout is not very successful, the tone being rather harsh.

Jules Massenet not infrequently descended to pot-boilers, and *Neapolitan Scenes* is of this class. *The Dance* might have been all right as the accompaniment to a ballet, but is almost worthless intrinsically, while *The Fête* is a mere swirl of noise—as, of course, fêtes usually are! Both these are played with singularly little gradation of tone, and, in fact, the best part about this record is the actual recording.

The duplication and triplication of the same things by different companies does not make a reviewer's task any easier, but I am going to take the plunge by declaring the Grenadier Guards' version of *Wembley Tattoo* to be the best issued yet. True the "battle" is puerile and feeble and the bellowing of words of command overdone and tiring, but the tone is free from stridency throughout (even when the fifes are doing their damndest) and the "dying away in the distance" effect is nothing short of marvellous. The general programme of the records is much the same as those previously issued by other companies, but they differ in details. Perhaps the best feature of all is that the choruses sound as if the singers are really enjoying themselves. Two sides of *Hope, Glory, Pomp, and Circumstance* is rather a lot at once. The chorus from *Land of Hope and Glory*, when it occurs in the march, is sung by a soloist and chorus, while on the other side two verses of the song are sung by Harold Williams, accompanied by the band with a chorus joining in the refrains. The solo voice throughout has rather a hollow effect—as is not infrequent in vocal records made by the new process—but the volume of sound when the chorus add their weight to Mr. Williams and the band is enough to make the Associated Glee Clubs of America turn green with envy.

The more I hear the records made by Lieut.-Colonel Mackenzie-Rogan's band the more I marvel that other bands do not follow their example and use tympani when recording. Even when they are not as loud as they might be depth is added to the tone and the Duophone Company now manage them so well that the roundness of tone is very realistic and the pitch can be distinguished. *Morning, Noon and Night* is typically Suppèsque. Gay tunes strung together with rather obvious packing. The inner parts are particularly well played and recorded. In *a Persian Market* is both well played and chattered! The two marches are played in real march time; a band of this calibre having no need to show off its virtuosity. The selection from *H.M.S. Pinafore* is so good that my only regret is that it does not occupy a twelve-inch disc, so that more of these good healthy tunes might have been played in full.

The new record by the Royal Air Force Band is rather disappointing. On one side the bells, brazen gongs, and other gadgets that go to make up this pseudo Chinese music, are magnificently

recorded, but the music itself is so banal; while on the other, in addition to the banality of the music, we have to suffer from some really piercing noises. The tone of the piccolo sounds as if the record has been made in a huge cathedral, or some similar building, with the piccolo player standing right on top of the recording apparatus. All this goes to prove that the new process of recording is still in a state of extreme infancy, and that the placing of the instrumentalists demands as much care as ever it did. The two marches played by this band are very pedestrian. Of the two *Wien bleibt Wien* is the better. Recording is good.

Good though the latest version of *Martial Moments* is, I prefer the more virile playing in that by the Grenadier Guards. The balance in the former is almost perfect, but the cymbals sound rather tame when compared with a record made by the new process. My copy of this record has the labels on the wrong sides, and as it is a properly labelled and not an advance copy, presumably some will have been put on the market in the same condition! In the first of the three *Nell Gwynne Dances* the tempo is rather fast and the rhythm slightly distorted, with the result that the rocking lilt it should have is lost. Otherwise these dances are daintily played with a nice subdued tone.

W. A. C.

**MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS**

The raciest record this month is *London and Daventry calling*, by the **Savoy Orpheans**, on H.M.V., C.1251 (4s. 6d.). It is an excellent skit on wireless, and so briskly carried out that a certain crudeness of attack is probably desirable.

There are people that I know who cannot keep their seats when the band strikes up *Valencia*. It is one of the three or four irresistible tunes of the moment, but **Moschetto** has not been well supported by his orchestra in his record of it on Vocalion X.9749 (3s.) with a dullish Tchaikovsky song, *Why are the roses so pale?* on the back. It is a pity that Moschetto just misses the really first-class record so often. **De Groot** hardly ever does, and the suavity of his *In Shadowland* and *All Alone* (H.M.V., B.2261, 3s.) disarms criticism. Wonderful recording marks the **Salon Orchestra** as usual (H.M.V., B.2277, 3s.), but why inflict *Marcheta* and *June brought the roses on us* again?

A "novelty" piano solo, *Syncopated Moonbeams*, by **Tony Fones**, on Aco G.15917 (2s. 6d.), is extremely attractive and **Mario de Pietro** performs prodigies of activity on the mandoline in a *Bolero* and *Danza e cantabile* of Calace on Aco G.15918 (2s. 6d.). **Max Darewski** has a charming waltz, *Rylda*, of his own composition and Tchaikovsky's *Chanson Triste* on Zono. 2704 (2s. 6d.).

Last month's correspondents were asking for spoken records; and here comes one, on Vocalion K.05216 (4s. 6d.), with the *Seven Ages* and *Poor Yorick*, and a hotch-potch called *Shakespeare's War Cry*, declaimed by **Henry Baynton**. Mr. Baynton's admirers may treasure it, and it may prove useful for educational purposes, though I think there are some textual slips. My chief wonder is what Mr. Baynton thought of his own voice and manner of delivery when he first heard the record. Wasn't it rather a shock to him?

The songsters are in great voice this month, and I am bewildered by all the versions of *Ukulele Lady*, *Ukulele Baby*, and *Ukulele Lullaby*. (Ukulele, I understand, means Dancing Flea!) **George Berry** gets the prize for the two stupidest songs on one record, *Twenty-five and six* and *The more I see of Mary Seymour* (Imperial 1560, 2s.), but the latter has a good tune. The admirers of **Dick Henderson**—and they are very many—will be glad to have excellent records of his "Ha! Ha! Joke's over!" in *Yorkshire* and *Pal of my cradle days* (Imperial 1567, 2s.) and *Lancashire* and *Had I but known* (Imperial 1559, 2s.). **Billy Williams** and his genial laugh rattle through a couple of "Father" songs on Aco G.15763 (3s.) and **Harry Fay** contributes four music hall ditties of the moment on Parlo. 5556 and 5557 (2s. 6d. each). **Frederick Bishop** is robust and clear in *Hugo* and *Sleepy Time Gal* (Parlo. 5555, 2s. 6d.), but for the latter song—which is better than most—I prefer **Norman Clark**, who sings it to a guitar accompaniment, with *Paddlin' Madelin' Home* (Voc. X.9753, 3s.) very charmingly. This is worth getting. **Charles Bonheur** and **Guy Victor** are reliable on their Imperial records, and the ease of **Bruce Wallace's** sometimes strident tenor voice (on Parlophones) does not fail to attract; but I feel that I cannot do justice every month to these regular performers. They sing poor stuff, but they do it most competently; and every now and then they are moved to excellence. Of **Billy Desmond** this is especially true. He knows (none better) that his



voice is made for better songs than the six which he contributes to the Aco, bulletin this month; but he invests each of them with a quality of intelligence and accomplishment. *Honey, I'm in love with you* and the *Indian Love Call* (Aco G.15924, 2s. 6d.) are, unfortunately, rather belated; but his *I'm sitting on the top of the world* and *I'm on the way to Dreamland* (Aco G.15928, 2s. 6d.) are good and new; and he backs two songs of **Charman and Gray** with *Speak* and *The Two of Us* (Aco G.15927 and Aco G.15925, 2s. 6d. each). This last, *The Two of Us*, is to my mind the most catchy tune of the day. There is also a version by **Charles Bonheur** on Imperial 1563 (2s.), but best of all I like that of **Scovell and Wheldon** on Parlo. 5558 (2s. 6d.) with *Feel'n' kind of blue*. Anyhow everyone should get this tune in one form or another. **Hatch and Carpenter** are simple and clear in the amusing *If I like it and Ukulele Avenue* (Zono. 2706, 2s. 6d.). The **Trix Sisters** reappear with two records (Columbia 3914 and 3915, 3s. each), unfortunately duplicating two songs, *I'm knee-deep in daisies* and *I care for him*, which everyone already has in Jack Smith's inimitable versions. But apart from this they are desirable records, daintily but not too distinctly sung. **Sir Harry Lauder** (H.M.V. D1078, 4s. 6d.), must be satisfied with this recording of his *Soosie McLean* and *When I meet John MacKay*, two very typical songs; they are very fine.

Of the Co-Optimists, **Melville Gideon**, with an orchestra to punctuate his piano accompaniments, is wistfully reproachful in *Once upon a time* and *To pass the time away* (H.M.V., B2262, 3s.) as only he knows how to be, with his velvety voice and puckered forehead; while the **Gilbert Childs** record (Columbia 3902, 3s.) of *The rich man drives by* is one that must not on any account be missed. The humour is rich and the recording superb. **Dorrie Dene** in *Down where the water-melons grow* and a burlesque of *Ukulele Lady* (Vocalion X.9752, 3s.) is full of spirit, but I wish Vocalion would give us back *Isabella Patricola*.

I have kept **Jack Smith** till the end because his is the best of the whole lot of sung records. *Are you sorry* and *Some other bird whistled a tune* (H.M.V., B.2270, 3s.). Masterpieces of their kind; and the hiss of "diamond rings" in the latter is positively startling.

In a way it is rather a pity that *Some other bird* is also chosen by **Sybil Sanderson Fagan** for her debut on Columbia 3901 (3s.) in whistling solos. *Honeymoon Waltz* is on the other side. My canary, who is generally rather lively on review days, nearly went mad over this record, and I cannot advise any reader to live without having both versions of *Some other bird*. Then, for those who have the *gout Americain*, there is **Aileen Stanley** in *I love my baby* and *No Man's Mamma* (H.M.V., B.2278, 3s.) a fine piece of recording and **The Revellers** (H.M.V., B.2276, 3s.) are as wonderful and vimful as ever in *Bam Bam Bammy Shore*. This record is a sure hit in any assembly.

The best piano recording among these records is the accompaniment of **Layton and Johnstone** in *You forget to remember*, Col. 3916, 3s. On the other side is *Bambalina* and *Wildflower* from the play at the Shaftesbury Theatre. I was privileged to see this musical play the other evening, and to hear the refreshingly good singing of **Howett Worster** and **Miss Kitty Reidy** (though the latter is risking her voice for the sake of her part). There are plenty of good records of this attractive music, and it would be hard to choose between the selections on Vocalion X.9762 (3s.) and Aco G.15921 (2s. 6d.); but the record of the **Savoy Orpheans** on H.M.V., C.1252 (4s. 6d.) is perhaps more to the point, as it has a selection from *Turned Up* on the other side. (Perhaps I ought to say that the Columbia records of *Wildflower* with the original caste have not reached me.) As for *Turned Up*, the play at the New Oxford Theatre, I have not seen it, but the H.M.V. records of it are brilliant pieces of recording and will disappoint no one who wants to be reminded of the performance. In some cases, such as *Alack-a-day* (H.M.V., B.2279, 3s.) sung by **Leo Franklyn**, the words are probably clearer than to nine-tenths of the audience in the theatre. *Take a chance* (B.2280, 3s.) is sung most delightfully by **Miss Anita Elson**; and the laughter of the saxophone in **Lupino Lane's** *If you want a little love, try this* adds to the humour of the song.

*Kid Boots* at the Winter Garden Theatre is one of the best musical shows that I have seen lately, thanks to Leslie Henson and Miss Vera Lennox; but the music is not its strongest point, and even the selection by the **Savoy Orpheans** on H.M.V., C.1249 (4s. 6d.) is poor stuff. I should have preferred Leslie Henson's discourse on the sex complex. Of other musical shows—there is a good selection from *The Blue Kitten* on Voc. X.9750 (3s.), another from *Betty in Mayfair* on Pathé 5263, and another of "vocal gems" from the latter, a good bit of recording, on Columbia 9082 (4s. 6d.) and, queerly enough, an **Edith Lorand Orchestra**

selection from *The Geisha* (Parlo. E.10428, 4s. 6d.) which stirs the memory and has, besides, an exotic Lorrainesque flavour throughout.

On dit that at His Majesty's Theatre you are blown out of your seat by the singing in *The Student Prince*. Judging by the *Drinking Song* on Columbia 9083 (4s. 6d.), as played on my new H.M.V. machine with a loud needle, I can quite believe it. There are four records made by the original artists and orchestra for Columbia; but, good as they are in their way, I would exchange them all for the one record, H.M.V., C.1250 (4s. 6d.), which has the "vocal gems" sung by the **Light Opera Co.** on one side, and a selection by the **Savoy Orpheans** on the other. This seems to me to be exactly what most of us want who are not special devotees of the particular play; and the recording is beyond reproach. PEPPERING.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

[Each comment or question should be written clearly on a separate slip of paper and addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frieth Street, W. 1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given for reference.]

(386) **De Groot**.—Apropos Mr. Gayton's article (February issue) is not another "appreciation" worth recording? A lecturer, broadcasting, had to curtail his talk and ended, "I must now bid goodnight to you as I understand you are going over to De Groot and his E string"!—E. B., Brockley, S.E. 4.

(387) **Lilac Time**.—I heartily endorse "Erlkönig's" letter in the December number of your excellent paper. Could we not have this gem of an opera in its entirety on records?—L. F., Bloemfontein.

(388) **Records Wanted**.—Are there any records of Strauss's (a) "Don Quixote," (b) "Aus Italien," (c) "Sinfonia Domestica"; Holbrooke's (d) "Children of the Don Overture"; Schumann's (e) "Concertstück"; Brahms' (f) "Academic Festival," (g) "Tragic" Overtures, (h) "Symphony No. 3," (i) "Symphony No. 4"; Lortzing's (j) "Undine Overture"?—

[(a), (b), (c), (d) No; (f) Col. L.1637, Parlo. E.10378.]

(389) **Records Wanted**.—I should be pleased if you could inform me whether any of the following pieces of music have been recorded: "Amoretten Tanze" and "Die Hydropaten" by Gungl; "Etincelles" by Waldteufel; "Estudiana," "Venus on Earth," and "Unrequited Love."—P. W. B., Southampton.

(390) **Best Records Wanted**.—(a) "Symphonie Pathétique" (Tchaikovsky), (b) "Liebestraum No. 3" (Liszt), (c) "M'appari tutt' amor," (d) "Prize Song" ("Die Meistersinger").—F. J. P., Kensal Rise.

[(a) H.M.V. (b) Backhaus, H.M.V. D.788. (c) Caruso, H.M.V., D.B.159; Bonci, Col. D.17206; Gigli, H.M.V., D.B.109; Lazaro, Col. 7344; Martinelli, H.M.V., D.B.336 are all very good. I prefer Caruso's record, but advise you to take both sides of record into account when making a choice.—"Piccolo."]

(391) **Gramophone Adjustment**.—I recently improved the tone of my gramophone very considerably by the following device. My instrument is a table model, and under the base were four very small rubber pads, which had become very hard. I removed these pads, and bought two small Sorbo rubber balls, 3d. size. These were cut exactly in half with an old razor blade, and affixed to the four corners with Croid. Owing to the improved insulation, surface noise and motor grind has practically disappeared.—T. I. W., Swansea.

## ANSWERS TO QUERIES

[Answers must be written on separate slips and should be forwarded to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frieth Street, London, W. 1, as early in the month as possible.]

(362) **Record Wanted**.—Try Collier's Gramophone Stores, 39, The Cliffe, Lewes.

(380) **Best Record**.—I recommend the Brunswick Clifphone record of Liszt's "Third Nocturne in A flat (Liebestraum)," played by Leopold Godowsky, and backed by "Polonaise in A flat, Op. 53" (Chopin). As an alternative, should your correspondent consider the tone of the piano to be too metallic, I would suggest the H.M.V. record by Backhaus.—H. S. W., Bow.



# Gramophone Societies' Reports

[Owing to the increasing number of societies, it is unfortunately necessary to ration reporting secretaries down to 200 words a month. Reports must reach the London Office before the fifteenth of the month for inclusion in the next number. Items from programmes must be incorporated in the report; programmes separately attached cannot be printed.]

**AGRICOLA GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—An attendance of seventy marked the occasion of the visit to the society on March 9th of Mr. H. L. Rink, of the Gramophone Company, Ltd., who presented a lecture-demonstration on "The History of the Gramophone," illustrated by the new H.M.V. instrument. The lecture, tracing as it did the evolution of the gramophone from the year 1850, when sound was first recorded on smoked glass, to the present day, was thoroughly enjoyed by all present. The musical portion of Mr. Rink's demonstration included records by Amato, Caruso, Chaliapine, Galli-Curci, and Heifetz, and no comment is necessary on the excellence of the fare provided. But it was perhaps unfortunate that no orchestral record was included in this portion of the programme, inasmuch as *La Boutique Fantasque*, played earlier in the evening, is hardly a record on which to judge the competence of the new instrument to adequately reproduce an orchestra (*vide THE GRAMOPHONE*, Vol. III., page 260). Mr. Rink concluded his programme with the *Round the World Medley*, played by the Savoy Orpheans, after which a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the lecturer for having given the society such a splendid evening.—EDWARD U. BROCKWAY, *Hon. Secretary*.

**THE BIRMINGHAM GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—This society has been functioning more or less privately for some time, but owing to the great number of friends of present members who have asked to join, it has been decided to make the meetings open to anyone desirous of joining, the meetings to be held at the Ebenezer Chapel, Steelhouse Lane, twice monthly, on Tuesdays, the March dates being Tuesdays, March 16th and March 30th, at 7.15 p.m. The first meeting in each month is devoted to a special classical programme of educational value, arranged by a well-known musician interested in the welfare of the society. The second in each month is devoted to a miscellaneous demonstration of the latest records which ear being sent to us monthly by the Vocalion, Parlophone, Homochord, and Pathé companies, for which we heartily thank the companies concerned. Terms of membership on application to the above-mentioned address.—CHARLES SUMMERFIELD, *Hon. Secretary*.

**BLACKPOOL GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The meeting for February 3rd was an entire change of programme from the general routine, being in the way of a combined members' programme, each member contributing a record of their choice, and a fine assortment being handed in. The numbers coming on for applause being *Lilac Time*, *Rigoletto Fantasia*, *God is a Spirit*, *Humoresque*, *Love's Old Sweet Song*, *Melody in F*, *Ave Maria*, *Wait*, *On with the Molley*, and *Babette*. This class of programme was undoubtedly a success judging by the applause, and will be repeated on future occasions.

Our meeting for February 17th was in the hands of Miss Wilson, who gave us an excellent selection of records, items of note being *Mignon Overture*, Opera House Orchestra; *Memory Melody*, Doris Vane; *Carnival Children*, Geiger Orchestra; *Angel's Serenade*, Hubert Eisdell; *All Scotch*, Black Diamonds; *Old Black Joe*, Alma Gluck; *Where my Caravan*, Kennerley Rumford; *Bedouin Love Song*, Malcolm McEachern; *I'll sing thee Songs of Araby*, John Harrison; *Ideale*, Jean Lensen Orchestra; finishing with *Good Friday Music*, by the Albert Coates Orchestra. At the conclusion a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Miss Wilson.—WM. GRAINGER, *Recording Secretary*.

**THE BLACKPOOL RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.**—On Wednesday, February 24th, at 7.30 p.m., we had a meeting at Collinson's Café, Promenade. The musical programme was arranged by Messrs. Pollard's. They had arranged to give the demonstration on a gramophone which was making its debut in public. But the motor had unfortunately taken to itself to become unruly. However, during the interval it was coaxed into a more amenable frame of mind, and the second half of the programme was decidedly better, from a reproduction point of view. The

outstanding items in the programme were as follows: *Children's Overture*, *Humoresque* (Strockoff), *Polonaise in A major* (Hoffmann), *Waltz Song* from *Tom Jones* (Stralia), *Till's Merry Pranks* and *Edward* (Allin)—all Columbia. *The Lost Chord* and *Flight of Ages* (Regal), *Cohen 'phones his landlord* (Parlo.) and *When my ships come sailing home* (Dawson) (Zono.). *Edward* is certainly a wonderful record, and the recording is magnificent, nothing less.

Owing to a mistake in the printing of advice cards to the members, the usual demonstration of new issues was announced for the 17th inst. instead of the 10th.—V. P. BARRAUD THOMAS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

**BRADFORD AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.**—A demonstration by Mr. Rowntree, of Messrs. Joshua Marshall and Co., Ltd., was held in the Church House on Wednesday, February 24th, under the auspices of the Bradford and District Gramophone and Phonograph Society. The chair was occupied by Mr. H. Watson, the president of the society. The programme was composed of outstanding records from the Vocalion catalogue and covered vocal, orchestral, band, and instrumental items, and among those which were particularly enjoyed were a pianoforte solo (*Valse in E flat*), by Sapellnikoff, who recently appeared in Bradford, a song *Je veux vivre*, by Luella Paikin (soprano), a violin duet, *Larghetto*, by A. Fachiri and Jelly d'Aranyi, a vocal duet, *Lovely Maiden in the Moonlight* (*La Bohème*), sung by K. Destournel (soprano) and F. Titterton (tenor), a song, *Trees*, by Phyllis Archibald (contralto) and *One of the Guards*, a fine song by the well-known bass, Malcolm McEachern. The audience also enjoyed an accordion solo, *Guarany Selection*, cleverly played by A. Palet Gallarini, and *Silver sands of Waikiki*, played on Hawaiian guitars, by Ferrera and Franchini. At the close of the recital the chairman gave a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Rowntree, who was warmly applauded by the large audience present.

A successful gramophone recital was given by Mr. W. Myers, a member of this society, on March 10th, at the Church House, North Parade, Bradford. The outstanding records were as follows: *Handel's Largo*, sung by Caruso; *Echo Song*, by Galli-Curci; *Song of the Volga Boatmen*, by Chaliapine; a 'cello solo *Meditation* (Squire); the *Figaro Overture*, played by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra; and a very fine accordion solo, the *Barber of Seville Overture*. A hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Myers was given by the chairman, Mr. Watson, president of the society, at the close of the enjoyable evening.

The society is very grateful to the Vocalion, Parlophone and Edison Bell companies for the very choice records which they are contributing to the society's library and which have been so much enjoyed by the members.—H. GOLDSMITH, *Hon. Sec.*, 18, Salt Street, Bradford.

**BRIXTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—Report of meeting held on Tuesday, February 2nd. A very large number of members and friends were present. The president, Mr. Mackenzie, in the chair. The evening commenced with a brilliant programme provided by Mr. Brayne, the manager of the Orchorsol Gramophone Co., who used an Orchorsol Junior, which model, like all of this make, gave a deep rich tone. The outstanding record played during this programme was *Humoresque* (Dunkler-Squire), a 'cello solo which contains a beautiful "glissando" passage very seldom heard now. The other records played were mostly new recordings and were enjoyed by the audience. After the interval Mr. Webb gave another of his masterly lectures on Needles. The next item was a competition for the best record, which was won by Mr. Scrivener with Schubert's *Serenade*, Roy Henderson (Vocalion); the prize was a copy of H.M.V. "Opera at Home." Mr. Scrivener will be giving the March 2nd programme, "Operatic Selections." The competition was followed with a short talk by Mr. Borders on "Operatic Music," which serves as a kind of a preface to the next month's programme. As usual new members were enrolled. Previous to the main programme new issues of Parlophone and Vocalion were played, which is our usual practice. A number of new albums of the above records are now available for the use of members. All interested are invited to attend the next meeting at Morris Hall, Bedford Road, S.W. 4, or write for prospectus 1226 to Mr. FISHER, 28a, Fieldhouse Road, S.W. 12.



**BURNLEY GRAMOPHONIC SOCIETY.**—On Tuesday last, at Ebenezer School, the headquarters of this society, to a full hall of members and friends, a most interesting lecture and recital was given by Mr. Moses Baritz (of Manchester) entitled, "The Life and Works of Hector Berlioz." Dealing with the life of Berlioz, he gave a lucid and vivid picture of the great composer's ups and downs in life, and by his most interesting manner in which he described these, kept the audience in a highly interested mood by the exceeding elaborate way in which he dealt with Berlioz' love affair, and infatuation for an Irish girl, who at the time was playing Shakespeare in Paris in 1829, when he was but a boy of twelve years of age, about the same time having discovered Beethoven and in his dual enthusiasm, he resolved to follow in the footsteps of Beethoven and write something expressing his new love. This brought about the composing of *The Beloved Theme*, which, in after years he introduced as his main theme in the *Symphonie Fantastique*, and this was the work which Mr. Baritz fully dealt with, giving it in its entirety and pointing out that it was a work well worth every society of this kind, who had any ambition for high class music, to have placed before them, and undoubtedly, after hearing the works played, and the very lucid manner in which he explained same, as he went along, proved that he was not far wrong.

Space will not allow us to deal with the *Fantastique* in full, but we would like to mention that this is without doubt one of the finest interpretations in orchestration which this society has ever had the pleasure of hearing, and also drew the attention of the audience to the recording of the various instruments used, and how true they were, the tubas and drums which have never before been recorded being especially prominent.

Altogether, the lecture took about an hour and three quarters, and before Mr. Baritz retired to catch his train a hearty vote of thanks was accorded him on the motion of Mr. W. Hartly, who presided, who stated that it was the finest lecture demonstration he had ever heard, and that if this society would arrange other lectures of this description the members would undoubtedly appreciate and more fully understand the higher class of music, as a lecturer of Mr. Baritz' calibre made such high-class works look so simple. This was carried by acclamation and to which Mr. Baritz responded saying that he had done a very daring thing with playing such a long symphony through, also the manner in which they had received his efforts had given him the greatest of pleasure.

The latter part of the programme was provided by Mr. W. Hargreaves, of Hebrew Road, who also provided the Grafonola and records, also acted as demonstrator.

In conclusion we would like to draw the attention of all the patrons to these concerts of this society, not to forget the social and dance on Tuesday next at Duke Bar Assembly Rooms, tickets for which are being sold in good numbers. This is being organised by the lady members and it is their desire to hand over a good sum. Also the committee desire to thank the Parlophone and Vocalion companies for another donation of records which they recently received as a donation to their library.

**CARDIFF AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—On February 18th a "Best Record" competition was held. Judging was by popular vote, and it was no doubt owing to the unavoidable complication of the marking that the following somewhat peculiar verdicts were arrived at. Instrumental: 1, Harpsichord solo, *Turkish March* (Mozart), Lewis Richards (Brunswick, 3s.), 148 marks. 2, *Caprice Poétique* (Liszt), Cortot (H.M.V., 8s. 6d.), 140 marks. Vocal: 1, *O soave fanciulla* (*La Bohème*), Caruso and Melba (H.M.V., 10s. 6d.), 181 marks. 2, Brahms' *May Night*, Muriel Brunskill (Col., 4s. 6d.), 180 marks. There was a prize of 8s. 6d. in each class, won by Miss G. Bayley and Miss Lilian Jones respectively.

The meeting for March 11th was taken in hand by the ladies. Miss M. Mills-Davies took the chair, and the first half of the programme was occupied by Miss E. D. Capon, who played the whole of the *Symphonie Fantastique* of Berlioz in the admirable new version by Columbia. After the interval Miss E. R. Napper took charge and gave us a selection of the most notable records issued during 1926. These included the *Londonderry Air* (London String Quartet), *Semiramide Overture*, Chaliapin and Austral in the *Church Scene* from *Faust*, and Boellman's *Suite Gothique*, played by Herbert Dawson. Several important additions have been made to our record library, for which we wish to express our thanks to the Vocalion, Parlophone, Duophone, Columbia, and Pathé Frères companies for their generous gifts of records.—TREVOR PRICE, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

**DEWSBURY AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The society held two excellent meetings in January. The first, a competition evening, resulting in a Columbia record, the property of the chairman, Mr. Prichard, obtaining the most votes. The record was one side of the Max Bruch *Concerto*.

The other meeting was the feature of the month, when Mr. Rink, of the H.M.V. Company, gave his usual splendid entertainment, for which he required five gramophones and two grand pianos. The committee have written letters to THE GRAMOPHONE, endeavouring to get some sort of arrangement so that gramophone users can bring their full pressure of influence to bear on the recording companies in the matter of desirable recordings. This is thought to be very essential.

The writer of these notes gave the first of the February meetings, which included the following records: *Minuet and Badinerie for flute and strings* (Bach) (Col.); *Scherzo from Seventh Symphony* (Beethoven) (Parlo.); *Roman Carnival Overture* (Berlioz) (Col.); *Sea Shanties* (H.M.V.); *Dance Duet from Hansel and Gretel* (Humperdinck) (Parlo.), and an orchestral version of *Tambourin* (Rameau) (Col.), and other records.

The society paid their first visit to their sister town, Batley, on February 23rd, where they were welcomed by a bumper audience who greatly appreciated the programme given on behalf of the committee by Mr. Prichard and Mr. Brasher. The programme included the *Unfinished Symphony* and a quintet from *L'Ilac Time*, *Salt Water Ballads*, Heifetz playing *On wings of Song*, by Mendelssohn, and Luigini's ever popular *Ballet Egyptien*. Two old H.M.V. records were played and by contrast a remarkable organ record, a plum label record from the H.M.V. mid-February catalogue. The machines were kindly lent for the occasion by Messrs. Ruddlesden and Messrs. J. H. Auty. The deputy-mayor presided and thanked the society for coming to Batley.—R. D. KEIGHLEY, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

**THE DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY** at their February meeting, enjoyed a lecture from the Rev. H. M. Harriss on César Franck. Mr. Harriss commenced by sketching briefly the life of the composer and then enumerated and compared his various compositions. He described very fully the indifference and active opposition which Franck encountered—an opposition which was partly countered by the devoted support of his pupils and the whole-hearted appreciation of Liszt. Mr. Harriss had brought together nearly all the existing recordings of César Franck's music and played parts of the *Symphonic Variations* (H.M.V.), the *Sonata in A for Violin and Piano* (H.M.V.), the *Symphony in D minor* (Columbia), *Le Chasseur Maudit* (Columbia), the *String Quartet* (H.M.V.), and *Paris Angelicus*, by Frances Alda (Victor). *Paris Angelicus* was the only recording of a vocal composition by Franck available and would stand out anywhere by virtue of its sheer beauty. (It can be obtained in London.) Mr. Harriss left no doubt as to his own great admiration for all César Franck's work, and indeed conveyed the impression that he considered Franck, with the exception of two or perhaps three others, the greatest of all composers, an opinion which each person will endorse or repudiate according to his or her own conceptions. The meeting concluded with a very hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Harriss for his admirable lecture which many members found particularly interesting on the educative side as César Franck is a composer who is not readily accepted by the musical public and whose climb to recognition and fame has been and is slow.—NOEL C. WEBB, *Hon. Reporting Secretary*.

**THE EALING RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.**—The March meeting of the above society was a great success. A start was made with new issues of which the following were much appreciated: H.M.V., D.B.854, *O Patria Mia* (*Aida*), sung by Rosa Ponselle (soprano). H.M.V., C.1244, *Gondolier and Nightingale*, Op. 49 (Langey), played by the Band of H.M. Royal Air Force. H.M.V., B.2263, *Idyll* (Elgar), played by Herbert Dawson (grand organ). H.M.V., B.2257, *The Drage Way*, Norman Long (humorous); this is a fine record for a good laugh. Another nice lot of records was sent by the Vocalion Co.; their recordings are very good indeed. Their *Martial Moments* went with a bang, played by the 1st Life Guards. After the meeting each member has these records at home for a few days, until they have completed the circle, after which they are disposed of among the members. After the interval two very nice but short programmes were provided by Mr. Hawkins and Mr. Sillitoe.

Next meeting, first Thursday in April in Mr. Bensted's audition room, Uxbridge Road, West Ealing, near Drayton Green Corner. Visitors are welcomed; they will be sure of a fine musical evening.—REG. PAINE, *Recording Secretary*.



**ERITH TECHNICAL INSTITUTE GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**

One of the newest recruits to the devotees of recorded music is the Erith Technical Institute Gramophone Society. This society was formed last December. Mr. Tracy Robson, L.R.A.M., A.R.C.O., etc., was elected president, Mr. W. Neagle, B.Sc., chairman of the committee, and Mr. A. W. Knight as hon. secretary.

Six ordinary meetings have already been held. The last was on Friday, March 12th, when a lecture was given by the president on instrumental music.

The whole of the instruments forming the modern orchestra were described (with the aid of charts) and classified as to the "family." Special records from the H.M.V. educational section were played, D.557-8 demonstrating the tone, pitch, etc., of all these instruments, and later the listeners were able to pick out particular instruments from the general ensemble. Several examples being given in illustration. Referring to instrumental music, Mr. Robson explained some of the difficulties which beset composers when orchestrating due to the peculiar tone, etc., of some instruments, causing them to predominate in an orchestra at the wrong moment.

Finally the lecturer dealt with the evolution of the orchestra and spoke of some of the troubles of the early days when music so far as the orchestra was concerned was entirely in the hands of the noblemen. The additional records played were: *Overture, Magic Flute* (C.648), H.M.V.; *Overture, Hansel and Gretel* (D.591), H.M.V.; *Children's Overture* (L.1471), Col.; *Quartette in A minor*, Beethoven (L.1672), Col.

At the close the president was accorded a very hearty vote of thanks for his delightful lecture.

The society have been specially cheered by the kindness of the Parlophone Company in presenting several of their latest and best records and a similar gift has to be announced from the Vocalion Company. The society invites additional members, who should write to the secretary at the Technical Institute, Belvedere, Kent.

**GLASGOW AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—Our first January meeting was devoted to a recital of new recordings, given by Messrs. the City Gramophone Co., Ltd., president Jas. C. Stewart, Esq., occupying the chair. The programme submitted was an excellent one, containing a good blend of classical and ballad music and a sprinkling of humorous records.

Our meeting of January 27th was devoted to a competition composed of vocal and instrumental records. Mr. Jas. C. Stewart presided. The winning record in the vocal section was *The Arrow and the Song*, recorded by Peter Dawson. This is a ten-inch record at 3s. and well worth the money. The runner-up was *Porgi Amor*, recorded by Emmy Bettendorf, on a 12in. Parlophone record. This is an excellent record by one of the most pleasing sopranos recording for the gramophone at the present day.

On February 8th we had an excellent lecture-recital of national and folk-song music by our president, Mr. Jas. C. Stewart. He illustrated his remarks with many fine examples of folk-song music, such as *Widdicombe Fair*, *Ballad of Tuesday morning*, *Herdin Song*, *Blow away the Morning Dew*, *Kirkconnel Lea*, *Molly Brannigan*, and *Molly Bawn*. Mr. Stewart punctuated aptly the various recordings with brief illustrative sketches of the origin and history of the various songs. The evening was a most enjoyable one and was highly appreciated by all present. We are again indebted to Mr. Kelly, the manager of Messrs. Patersons Sons and Co., Ltd., for the use of two excellent gramophones—the new Hines machine and the new H.M.V.—T. MACFARLANE, *Hon. Secretary*.

**HALIFAX AND DISTRICT RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.**

On February 23rd the members (number having now increased to over 150) were entertained and instructed by Mr. T. Marchetti, who dealt with the two Mozart operas, *The Marriage of Figaro* and *The Magic Flute*. The story of each opera was told, as also particulars regarding the composer. Mozart wrote for a small number of instruments, but he obtained the desired effect in nearly every case. The music was delicate and beautiful—never crude, and its meaning could be grasped almost at the first hearing. It was simple in form and melodious. The songs of Mozart were difficult to sing. Being simple in form meant that to give the music the proper interpretation, correct intonation and phrasing were essential. Between each record played Mr. Marchetti supplied the connecting links of the stories. On March 9th a tenor competition took up the first part of the evening. Thirteen songs were played over and members were asked to vote as to what they considered the best three. Only the title of the song was announced. The record *Ay, ay, ay*, sung by Michele Fleta, got the largest number

of marks, though the *Prize Song* (Frank Mullings) ran it very close. A library of records is being started.—J. S. WARING, *Hon. Secretary*, 15, Willow Field Road, Halifax.

**HUDDERSFIELD GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The society had a very successful meeting on Thursday, February 11th, at the Northumberland Street schools. We had a capital attendance to hear a recital kindly given to the society by Messrs. Rushworths, Ltd., Westgate, Huddersfield, of H.M.V. records. Outstanding items were *La Ronde des Lutins*, Jascha Heifetz; *Fragment* from *Ballade in G minor*, Cortot; *Symphony No. 4 in F minor*, Royal Albert Hall Orchestra; *Sullanto a te*, Caruso; *Quartet in G minor* (Haydn), Flonzaley Quartet. At the close of the recital a hearty vote of thanks was given to Messrs. Rushworths, Ltd., for their fine recital. At our meeting of February 25th we had a "Parlophone Night," the records being sent to us each month by the Parlophone Co. The programme consisted of the following: Mozart's *Symphony in E flat* (Orchestra of the State Opera House of Berlin); *Wiegenlied*, *Schlafe, Schlafe, Nacht und Traum*, Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf; *Liebeslieder Waltz*, *Donauweibchen Waltz*, Mark Weber and his Orchestra; *Merry Widow Pot-pourri*, Edith Lorand Orchestra; *Confitebor Tibi*, *Bonum Est*, Sistine-Vatican Choir. Appreciation of the records was expressed by the members especially Mozart's symphony.

**LEEDS GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.**—The monthly meeting was held at the headquarters, Y.M.C.A., Albion Place, Leeds, on February 16th. It was our Vocalion night. The records were supplied by the Vocalion Company, and were afterwards presented to the record library. The gramophone used for the occasion was an Aeolian-Vocalion kindly lent by Hopkinson's Successors, Commercial Street, Leeds. It is a gratifying feature of the society, that we are always met with the utmost generosity and courteous consideration by manufacturers and dealers alike. The February numbers of the Vocalion records were enjoyed immensely. The duet, *Lovely maiden in the moonlight*, by Kathleen Destournel and Frank Titterton was great. Watcyn Watcyn's in *Songs of the Sea* made a very good impression. The *Concerto in D minor*, by Adila Fachiri and Jelly d'Aranyi, was just what could be expected. A hearty vote of thanks was passed for the Vocalion Company's generosity. The Parlophone Company are producing exceptionally fine records and are sending a few occasionally for demonstration which are always appreciated. We are unfortunate in being forced to have the reports of our meetings published in the following month's issue of THE GRAMOPHONE owing to our meetings being held too late for publication. We must try to remedy this next winter.—HARRY SMITH, *Hon. Secretary and Treasurer*.

**THE LEICESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—On February 22nd we were favoured with a return visit from Mr. Moses Baritz, an event which we had been anticipating with considerable pleasure in view of the success of his previous visit. His subject, "The Works of Mozart," provided a delightful and instructive talk, the lecturer being in his best form. The records demonstrated during the evening illustrated very clearly the fact that Mozart excelled in every sphere of musical composition, also the joyous nature of everything he wrote. At the conclusion Mr. R. P. Lamsdale very neatly expressed the thanks of the meeting, Mr. Baritz replying in his usual racy manner, his little talk when replying to the vote of thanks being very appropriate, and concluded one of the best meetings we have had. We were indebted to Messrs. Dalton and Sons for the loan of records and Mr. F. Benskin for the use of a Cabinet Columbia.

March 8th. By request this meeting was devoted to Gilbert and Sullivan, and a varied and enjoyable programme was appreciated by a good audience. The success of the evening was due to the following members, who loaned their records for the occasion: Messrs. L. Mason, W. Scott, A. W. Reeves, and A. Thompson. We continue to be favoured with an excellent selection of records from the Vocalion and Parlophone Companies which are much appreciated.—W. H. ABELL, *Hon. Secretary*.

**LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—A members' night, arranged for Monday, February 8th, when a score of members each furnished a record to form an impromptu programme, bid fair to wreck the fair reputation of the chairman and demonstrator, who were faced with the difficulty of arranging a somewhat bizarre and violently contrasted group of selections.

A programme of grand opera was presented on Monday, February 22nd, by the vice-president, Mr. S. F. Edwards, who, as usual, gave a very good account of himself. Records of selections



from 23 operas—by eighteen different composers—were included, and not one that was not worth the hearing. The programme was helpful in enabling one to crystallise partly-formed opinions: to give the palm for the best rendering of *Largo al Factotum* to Stracciari, as opposed to Ruffo; to agree with the frequently expressed view that the best record of Ruffo's is *Adamastor re dell'acque*; to grant to Hempel the highest honours for her *Voi che sapete*, and to Galli-Curci for the *Polonaise* from *Mignon*; and to find in the artistry and opulent tones of Kirkby Lunn one British singer, at least, who may rank with the world's greatest. Mr. Edwards' annotations were concise, pertinent, and very informative. —J. W. HARWOOD, *Recording Secretary*.

**MANCHESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—Unprecedented interest was lent to our March meeting by the visit of a number of members of the Liverpool Gramophone Society, headed by Mr. F. W. Buzzard (president) and Mr. J. W. Harwood (honorary secretary), who jointly provided the programme, and a specially large audience was present to welcome them. Mr. Harwood presented the first portion, of which every item was excellent, the most outstanding being two songs, *O Mistress Mine* and *Fair House of Joy*, perfectly sung by Gervase Elwes, a lovely 'cello solo, *Après un rêve* (Fauré), by Casals, and Mozart's *Schläfe, mein Prinzchen*, sweetly sung by Frieda Hempel. Mr. Harwood also gave the first four parts of *Le Carnaval des Animaux* (Saint-Saëns), the brilliant satire and humour of which afforded great entertainment. The second portion, provided by Mr. Buzzard, was nothing inferior in its admirably varied nature, and perhaps contained the gem of the whole evening in *As torrents in Summer* (Elgar), rendered by the Apollo Choir—a perfect example of recording. Other specially fine items were *The Tavern Song*, superbly sung by McEachern, the *Good Friday Music* from *Parsifal*, and the *Bridal Song* from Goldmark's *Rustic Wedding Symphony*. At the close of one of the most delightful evenings our society has enjoyed, for our visitors appeared to be gifted with the happy faculty of at once diffusing a spirit of spontaneous geniality throughout the assembly, the unanimous opinion was voiced that these inter-society visits should become permanent fixtures and that similar expressions of comradeship should be encouraged amongst all societies. —CECIL J. BRENNAND, *Hon. Secretary and Treasurer*.

N.B.—Will members take note that our next and all future meetings will be held in our new headquarters in the Milton Hall, 244, Deansgate.

**NELSON AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE MUSIC SOCIETY.**—On Tuesday, February 16th, the above society were favoured with a visit from Mr. Moses Baritz, of Manchester, who spoke on *Lohengrin*, with illustrations played on a Columbia Grafonola, kindly lent by Mr. de Luce. Mr. Baritz is evidently a Wagner enthusiast, and by his remarks and by his reading of Wagner's own exposition of his aims, helped his audience a long way along that road of understanding which is the true approach to appreciation. He drew attention to the importance in the "music-drama" of the *Holy Grail*, suggested in the music by the highest notes of the violins, and particularly by a five-note phrase. The same instruments, again in their highest range, are used for *Lohengrin*, expressing his spiritual nature, but the wood-wind, with warmer tones, is allotted to Elsa; the brass instruments typify the king and trumpets give forth the strains of *Lohengrin* triumphant in his character of champion and knight. The records used by Mr. Baritz included the *Preludes to Act 1* and *Act 3, Elsa's Dream*, sung by Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf, *Dost thou breathe the sweet incense*, sung by Max Hirzel, and Frank Mullings' rendering of *Lohengrin's Narrative and Farewell*, and all of them were heard with delight. At the close a very hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the lecturer and to Captain A. Smith, J.P., who presided.

The following meeting, held a fortnight later in the Borough Café, was devoted to *The Gondoliers*, the H.M.V. album of records, kindly lent by Mr. A. Edmondson, being used. Mr. P. Wilmore briefly summarised the story of the opera, with its amusing tangles, and read some of the sparkling passages of witty dialogue which occurred between the recorded music. This was well sung by Edna Thornton, Bessie Jones, Violet Essex, George Baker, John Harrison, Ernest Pike, and Robert Radford. The machine used was an H.M.V. new model, kindly lent by Mr. T. Croasdale. —MARGARET E. WADDINGTON, *Hon. Press Secretary*.

**THE NORTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.**—At our meeting of Saturday, March 13th, Mr. J. Wilkinson opened with a selection, played upon the society's machine, with a Seymour model C sound-box and steel needles.

Mr. Ivory occupied the chair. The outstanding features of Mr. Wilkinson's contribution were the splendid records of Malcolm McEachern—*The Tavern* and *The Showman*. The *Rondo* of Mozart, A. Sammons (violin), was also noteworthy, as was also *Air des Bijoux* (Faust), and *Charmant Oiseau* (*Perle de Bresil*), by Evelyn Scotney. The usual interlude of presentation records from the Vocalion Co. gave us the pleasure of hearing Frank Titterton in *Total Eclipse* (Handel). The Vocalion Co. have some very strong vocal artists. Mr. G. W. Booth followed, using an Exhibition sound-box and fibre needles; his star numbers being Chopin's *Valse in A flat*, Paderewski; *Qual voluttà trascorrere* (Lombardi), Caruso, Alda, and Journet; *Le Crucifix* (Faure), Gluck and Homer; *Dance of the Hours*, Vessella's Italian Band; *Andante Cantabile* (Haydn), Lener Quartet; and *Elégie* (Massenet), Caruso and Elman. Our next programme (Saturday, April 10th) will be divided between Messrs. Ivory and Hardisty. All communications to Mr. L. Ivory, 34, Granville Road, Stroud Green, N.—WILLIAM J. ROBINS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

**NORTH WEST GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—On March 14th the weightiest piece was the *Toreador's Song* (*Carmen*), all the most noteworthy versions being submitted for adjudication with the addition of the recently issued H.M.V. choral. The reverse side of this (*Faust*) came in for some very adverse criticism on account of excessive price and for not being on the same disc as the just previously issued glorious record of the *Soldiers' Chorus*. The records of *The Erl King* made up the next group. The Shakespearean series was concluded with the following: two most excellent records by Vocalion: "The Seven Ages of man," "To be or not to be" one side; reverse, Richmond's address to his troops before the Battle of Bosworth, and Henry V.'s St. Crispin speech, the two for shortness labelled "Shakespeare's War Cry." All for 4s. 6d.; jolly good value! Though perhaps lacking the opulent tone of McEachern (Vocalion), Aco have just published a quite good record of *Blow, blow* (Sargeant) at a lower price. This record accidentally started a demonstration of Aco products, and the audience was surprised at the high standard achieved by this make. John Thorn's *Sea Shanties* compared with H.M.V., came off with flying colours. The Aco surface is very near perfection and the recording is of the very best. —E. G. LAMBLE, *Hon. Secretary*, 51, Balmoral Road, London, N.W. 2.

**PRESTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—At our meeting on March 2nd we were honoured by the presence of the mayor and mayoress of Preston (Councillor and Mrs. Woolley). The mayor, in speaking appreciatively of the programme, remarked that if people had a leisure hour they could not spend it better than listening to good music. Many Preston people were really fond of music, and when he came to Preston 44 years ago he saw they were also fond of flowers. If the rising generation could be encouraged to love music and flowers they would not go far wrong. Mr. Fred Cartmell, who presided, in welcoming the mayoral party, claimed that there was room in Preston for a society like theirs, and that a love of music could be promoted by means of the gramophone. They tried to suit all tastes, and it was encouraging to note that in three years their membership had increased from thirty to nearly a hundred, and was growing every week. A choice selection of celebrity records were played, including a violin solo by Kreisler; *Sultano a te*, Caruso; *Fragment from Ballade, Op. 23, in G minor* (Chopin), by Cortot; the *Church Scene* from *Faust*; a duet by Chaliapin and Florence Austral; and *Sound, sound the Trumpet* (*I Puritani*), a duet by Robert Radford and Peter Dawson, as well as several orchestral pieces and the Savoy Orpheans in their *Round the World Medley* record. We beg to tender our sincere thanks to the Vocalion Gramophone Co., the Parlophone Co., Ltd., the Duophone Syndicate, Ltd., for their splendid gifts of records for inclusion in our library. They will be demonstrated to our members at our next meeting. —W. WEAL, *Hon. Secretary*, 250, Lancaster Road, Preston.

**RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—Owing to an outbreak of fire which occurred adjacent to this society's headquarters it was necessary as a temporary arrangement to hold the meeting on Monday, February 15th, at Messrs. Nuthall's Restaurant, Richmond. The demonstration of the E.M.G. gramophone which should have taken place was cancelled owing to the death of the principal. It is hoped that further arrangements may be made to hear this machine at a later date. The secretary, at short notice, arranged a most interesting programme of records recently issued by His Master's Voice, Parlophone, and Vocalion gramophone companies, which included: *Rosamunde Ballet Music* (H.M.V.), Royal Albert Hall Orchestra; *Laudate Dominum*



(Parlo.), Sistine Vatican Choir; *Prelude in G minor* (Rachmaninoff) (Voc.), York Bowen; *Summer is gone* (Coleridge Taylor) (H.M.V.), Glasgow Orpheus Choir; *Concerto for two Violins* (Bach.) (Voc.), Fachiri and d'Aranyi; *Symphony No. 39* (Mozart) (Parlo.), Opera House Orchestra; *Suite Gothique* (H.M.V.), organ solo, Herbert Dawson; *Lovely Maiden (La Bohème)* (Voc.), Destournel and Titterton.—T. SYDNEY ALLEN, *Hon. Press Secretary*.

**SHEFFIELD GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.**—At our meeting on February 2nd we had as usual the new issues from all the principal companies, and a very enjoyable evening was spent. Another record by the late Caruso was particularly welcome. Of the other H.M.V. issues the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra's contribution must be mentioned—the *Leonora Overture* of Beethoven. It is excellently done and the *Rosamunde Ballet Music* is equally fine. *Come to the Fair*, by the Gresham Singers, is also worthy of praise. Instrumental music is well represented by Jacques Thibaud and Harold Samuel. The Vocalion supplement is up to that company's high standard and contains some very interesting items. Roy Henderson has a splendid voice. He is one of the best baritones we have heard and we should imagine his records enjoy a big sale. The *Wasps Overture* (Vaughan Williams) is a very clever piece of work and is made the most of by the Aeolian Orchestra. The Vocalion experts have the knack of reproducing orchestral music almost perfectly. The records by Luella Paikin and Malcolm McEachern are amongst the finest as also are those by Enid Cruickshank and Lionel Tertis. Unfortunately, owing to a misunderstanding, the Columbia issues were not available, but we shall doubtless have an opportunity to hear them in due course. The competition for the President's Cup was won by Mr. Middleton with a record of Galli-Curci—*Sevillana*. We have some mixed feelings about the new recording and cannot say that we are altogether convinced of its merits, though it certainly marks an advance so far as choirs and other concerted vocal renditions are concerned. Our hospitable president, Mr. Duncan Gilmour, junior, entertains the committee each month, and we recently heard on his Stentorphone the new Sheffield Choir record. It was simply astounding.

Of exceptional interest was the fare provided on February 15th in that we had a lecture-recital by vice-president J. H. T. Holmes. His subject was Beethoven and Schubert, and he made the most of the possibilities they offer. *Egmont*, *Moonlight Sonata*, *Quartet in C major*, etc., represented Beethoven, whilst Schubert's *Marche Militaire*, *Erl King*, *Unfinished Symphony*, *Ave Maria* were also included.—THOS. H. BROOKS, *Hon. Press Secretary*.

**THE SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.**—At the February meeting of the above at the Clock Tower Chambers, High Street, Lewisham, Mr. Walter Yeomans (Principal of the education department of the Gramophone Co.) addressed the society on "Choral Music," and illustrated his lecture with some H.M.V. records. Mr. Yeomans, as has been demonstrated before, has the happy gift of being able to make the most serious subject entertaining. We began with Morley and Purcell and gradually arrived at that formidable modern effort in British choral music—Arnold Bax's *Mater Ora Filium*. Mr. Yeomans devoted half an hour to this work and shed a little light on its many intricacies. The Leeds Festival Choir have to be warmly congratulated on a magnificent achievement. The evening ended with some records of De Gogorza, whose beautiful voice seems not to be so popular or so well known as it deserves to be.

At our March meeting our secretary, Mr. Ernest Baker, who had chosen César Franck for his subject, dwelt long on the very lovely *Sonata in A major* (H.M.V.)—a work for which he has an unmistakable affection—and we also had part of the *Symphony in D minor* (Col.), among other things. The *Allegretto* movement of this work shows us Franck at his least interesting, perhaps, but one cannot expect everything in the garden to be lovely.

We meet at the Clock Tower Chambers, Lewisham, on the second Monday in each month, and Mr. Peter Latham (University Extension Lecturer) comes in April with Wagner as his subject. All communications please to the Secretary, 34, Chalsey Road, S.E. 4.—FLORENCE GAMON, *Recording Secretary*.

**THE SOUTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—At our concert on February 26th we had a number of old recordings brought forward by our members, Messrs. J. T. Fisher and P. Wilson, and several were found to be unfamiliar from the society's point of view. These were Elsie Suddaby singing two of Purcell's works—*When I am laid in earth* and *Hark the echoing air*; *Since first I saw your face*, by John Coates; two folk songs rendered in fine fashion by Edgar Coyle; two sea shanties by John Goss,

which with two army songs as encores went very well. The orchestral items, in view of recent recording developments in that direction, were considered of good value, being German's *Harvester's Dance*; the *Bronze Horse Overture*, one of the best of the Columbia four and sixpenny discs of the London Symphony Orchestra; part of the *Finale of the New World Symphony*, by the Hallé Orchestra; and Quilter's *Children's Overture*, by the New Queen's Hall Orchestra. Two examples of chamber music were the *Golden Sonata* of Purcell (the H.M.V. version) and a movement from Schubert's *Trio in B flat*. The third section of the programme was diversified and enlivened by talks on badly-centred records, otherwise "swingers," by Messrs. G. W. Webb, P. Wilson, and H. F. V. Little.

The concert on March 27th will be given by Messrs. G. E. W. Herbert and S. F. D. Howarth, with special programmes.—S. F. D. HOWARTH, *Reporting Secretary*.

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